

The Fate and Future of Jammu & Kashmir

The fate and future of the state of Jammu & Kashmir has been influenced and ruled by the closeness of two political dynasties, their lust for authority and power-centred politics. One lineage comprising Sheikh Abdullah, Gulshah, Farukh, and Omar remained at the centre of power in Jammu & Kashmir while the other clan consisting of Nehru, Indira and Rajiv has held the reins of power in Delhi. The present government, headed by Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and working under the patronage and direction of Smt. Sonia Gandhi is the latest version of the Nehruvian dynasty.

Jammu & Kashmir A State in Turbulence

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Keshav Kunj, Jhandewala
New Delhi - 110 055

Jammu & Kashmir- A State in Turbulence

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Publisher :

Suruchi Prakashan

Keshav Kunj, Jhandewala

New Delhi - 110 055

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Website : www.suruchiprakashan.com

© Author

First Edition : January, 2011 (*Vikram Samvat 2067*)

Price : **Rs. 200**
(Library Edition- **Rs. 300**)

Cover : Balraj

Type & Setting : Dharmendra Kaushal

Printer : Printech International, Delhi

ISBN : 81-89622-83-8

DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to the patriotic souls who sacrificed their lives for the protection of National Honour and Hindu Faith in the State of Jammu & Kashmir.



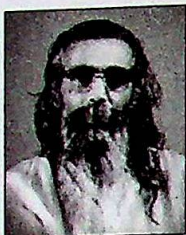
Late Pt. Prem Nath Dogra, who launched the Movement of Praja Parishad to sustain Jammu & Kashmir as an inseparable and integral part of BHARAT.



Late Dr. Om Prakash Mangi, a true nationalist who made enormous contribution to save Hindutva and played key role in various Movements from Praja Parishad to Baba Shri Amarnath Land Movement.



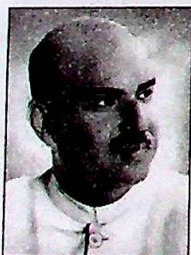
Late Shri Shyam Lal Sharma, a prominent social worker who guided every initiative and activity undertaken to intensify national awakening in the Jammu Region.



“On the issue of Jammu & Kashmir, the Government of India must act with firmness. The accession of Jammu & Kashmir has taken place long back. In fact, there is no need to rake up this issue now. The problem of Kashmir has finally been solved and the accession of Jammu & Kashmir to India is irrevocable and conclusive. The only way to ensure the security of Jammu & Kashmir is that it must be fully integrated with India (in line with other states). It is mandatory to abolish the Article 370 along with the separate flag and separate constitution.

Press Conference
November, 1953

M.S. Golwalkar
Sarsanghchalak, RSS



“Every inch of the land of Bharat belongs to all its people, and not just a particular community staying in a particular part of the country. Kashmir was and will always remain a part of the Indian nation. Those who do not want to stay in this country are free to move anywhere they like, but they can not take along even an inch of the land of this nation.”

Patiala
16 th April, 1953

Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee
Founder President
Bhartiya Jan Sangh

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Preface

The people of Jammu & Kashmir, continuously under severe strain due to the ethnic, regional and constitutional problems confronting them for the last 63 years, are a hapless lot. The problem that emerged with the partition of India has aggravated and worsened with the passage of time.

The numerous problems which remain unsolved include incomplete accession of the state, the Article 370, the unresolved issue of citizenship of lakhs of people who migrated from Pakistan, the rehabilitation of lakhs of innocent people who were forced to leave their home and hearth in the border areas during the wars between India and Pakistan, denial of legitimate rights to the people of Jammu and Ladakh, the back-breaking poverty of Ladakhis, spate of terrorism, the issue of rehabilitation of lakhs of Kashmiri Pandits displaced from their homes and innumerable other social problems faced by the people all these years. Worse still, the Tricolor, symbol of our National Honour, which is hoisted every year throughout the country with great enthusiasm is set on fire at the Lal Chowk in Srinagar by the subversive elements to show humiliation and dishonour to the Indian nation.

In fact, the legacy that our country inherited alongwith the freedom was full of problems mainly relating to Jammu & Kashmir. The territorial and constitutional issues concerning other princely

states were, sooner or later, resolved. With the reorganisation of states, their developmental work and reconstruction got underway and efforts to refine the administrative machinery in the country brought some results. But the state of Jammu & Kashmir could not be brought within the administrative and constitutional purview of the country. Resultantly, the state moved from one crisis to another, thus aggravating the malady. No worthwhile solution could improve the situation. Rather, the voice of separatism became louder, the scourge of terrorism raised its ugly head and despite deployment of armed forces in the state which proved huge drain on India's resources, the problem continued to deteriorate.

Even after six decades, the constitutional status of the state has come in for sharp questioning. What could be more pathetic than the fact that the successive governments have to proclaim repeatedly that "Jammu & Kashmir is an inseparable part of India." This frequent pronouncement made on every occasion of national and historical significance, by our leaders, weakens our position and sends negative signal to the entire world.

Unfortunately, the Indian Constitution has yet to establish its jurisdiction in the state of Jammu & Kashmir. The people from other parts of the country do not enjoy the same rights in the state as the Kashmiris. They can not settle in the state as they are not entitled to buy property or exercise their voting right or get employment in government sector. Now the situation has become so perilous that people from other parts of the country are unsafe and exposed to constant risk in the state. How strange it is that even the President of India and the Government officials are treated as "foreigners" in the state. Hon. President can not declare a state of emergency in the state, the laws formulated by the Parliament are not enforceable in the state. What is worse, alongwith the Indian Tricolor, green flag of the state displaying the sign of 'plough' has to be hoisted. The Union government, instead of curbing the divisive

and secessionist forces which cropped up due to the introduction of Article 370, is succumbing to the pressure of the separatists and political parties led by fanatics and fundamentalists.

Not only Indian citizens, even lakhs of people who migrated from Pakistan and settled in the state in 1947, have not been granted the citizenship rights. This is gross violation of law and denial of the legitimate rights of the people. At the time of partition, all the emigrants from Pakistan who settled in various parts of India were given compensation in the form of land, property etc. in lieu of the property left by them in Pakistan. But the people who opted to settle in Jammu & Kashmir have not been compensated for loss of land, property etc. they owned in Pakistan. Ironically, people who moved from Jammu & Kashmir and settled in Pakistan, return, take possession of their property, sell them and go back to Pakistan unrestrained by the state.

The people of Jammu and Ladakh are the worst victims of discrimination and inequality. The Union government has so far granted millions of rupees for development of the entire state but major portion of the funds has been spent on Kashmir alone which has always got preferential treatment. Sadly, the move has misfired as the doles of money have landed in the hands of the Kashmiri separatists and militants who use it for fomenting terrorism. Perhaps the patriotic people of Jammu and Ladakh are paying, through their poverty and backwardness, the price for their spirit of love for the nation. In every sphere, be it representation in state assembly, education, employment or developmental programmes, they are far behind the people of Kashmir.

During the four wars with Pakistan, the people residing in the border areas were forced to leave their homes, hearth and property and were settled in other parts of the country, as a temporary measure, but these people are still wandering as homeless, struggling for their settlement. The plight of the displaced people from Poonch

and Rajouri sectors is so grave that their children have no opportunities of education and employment. At least one generation of these people displaced during wars in 1965 and 1971, has lost everything with no future for their children.

Tormented by terrorism, more than 3.5 lakh Kashmiri Pandits who left their homes are struggling to eke out a living in other parts of the country. No government in Jammu & Kashmir has been able to settle them in their homes. The menace of terrorism has increased many fold, compelling even the Muslims to leave the valley.

When the entire nation celebrates the hard-won freedom every year, there is hardly anything to rejoice for vast majority of the people in the state. The reasons for such sorry state of affairs are not hard to fathom. The political compulsions of the Centre and State government, vote bank policies based on appeasement of a particular community, lack of determination and will power to deal with the menace – all these factors are strengthening the resolve of the separatists and terrorists.

In view of the above facts, this book “Jammu & Kashmir - A State in Turbulence” has been written to reveal some significant aspects of the problem and factors which are relevant in the overall context, such as the glorious past of Kashmir, role played by patriotic and great nationalists, causes of the present chaos, some historical facts suppressed so far and above all proposed constitutional provisions essential for the future of Jammu & Kashmir.

This book also highlights the grave mistakes committed by India's first Prime Minister, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru in Kashmir affairs, Historical contribution made by the late Pujya M.S. Golwalkar, the second Sarsanghchhalak of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) in the accession of Jammu & Kashmir to India, the great sacrifice of Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee for saving Kashmiri

people from the clutches of Pakistan and the great work done by numerous RSS volunteers to protect and preserve the National Honour in Jammu & Kashmir.

I express my gratitude to those scholar friends who accepted graciously my request for providing all important inputs and facilities for this book and spared their invaluable time to guide me throughout the project. I am particularly thankful to esteemed Shri Arun Kumar Ji, *Prant Pracharak*, RSS (Jammu), who has deep insight in respect of the delicately poised 'present', glorious 'past' and sensitive 'future' of the State. His cooperation and guidance in bringing out this book, right from the conceptual stage to the completion, has been quite significant. For all the errors and omissions regarding material facts and the language of this book, I take the responsibility. I will expect and appreciate the feedback with suggestions, from all friends and readers, to improve this work.

- Narender Sehgal



The Glorious Past of Kashmir

Kashyap's Kashmir

As per mythological legend mentioned in the *Neelmata Puraan*, a terrifying deluge turned the whole of India into a vast pool of water. When the water gushed out, the human life became habitable and sustainable and thus came into being, the social norms. But in the North of India in the lap of Himalayan ranges, a vast area of land was still inundated. This pool of water assumed serious proportions and looked like a dam. Then, as a result of violent geological upheavals, the mountainous walls developed cracks and the water flowed out with terrible force. The land that surfaced was a beautiful land, created by the volcanic force, which, as per legends, is 'Sati'. That is why the contemporary geologists called this place as 'Satidesh'.

Subsequently, Kashyap, the great Sage, chiselled the mountains into shape and made the place habitable. This task was successfully completed but it was felt that a river was required for providing safe passage to the pool of water. Kashyap approached Lord Shankar for help, who readily sent experts for making a river. The Lord Shankar used his '*trishul*' (Trident) to dig out the land and thus began the excavation work. The strike of the *trishul* brought

out a vast lump of soil, (*Vitasti*). That is how the river so created came to be known as '*Vitasta*'.

This river, removing the big stones and clearing its way, infused life into the area and provided water for the agriculture before finally merging into the 'Sindhu' river.

When the entire area was levelled and the banks of '*Vitasta*' took shape, Kashyap invited people across the country to settle there. Accepting this invitation with humility, people of different castes, sects and occupations including farmers, traders, *vaid*s and sculptors-all came and requested for allotment of land. Kashyap's *Rishis*, following certain norms distributed the land. The 'nagas' of Kashyap and people of other sections took little time in preparing lay-outs and setting up towns with beautiful homes, temples etc.

As things settled, the question arose as to who should be given the charge of governance of the region. After much reflection and deliberation, Neel, the son of Kashyap was declared the King of the State. Thus, Neel became the first King of Kashmir. He discharged his duties with tremendous acumen and ability. The news of the panoramic beauty and splendour of the state reached far and wide attracting people from distant places to come and settle in this place. The King Neel welcomed one and all, providing them ample amenities and the people lived in total peace and harmony.

In this Kashmir valley, various sects and *panthas* came to stay and prosper. Though the revolutions took place but they were different from the violent revolutions of the West. The revolution in the West would mean bloodshed and overthrow of the present regime and thrusting upon the people a new order. But in India, revolution implies bringing changes in the extant order which usher in progress and development without annihilating anybody's existence. Any change brought about with proper fusion of the old and new ideas does not lead to struggle and conflict. 'Reverence

for all beliefs' is the essence and core of the Indian ethos and this is known as 'Kashmiriat' in Kashmir.

The Faith of 'Nagpuja'

Historically, in the valley of Kashmir, there were no instances of imposing a particular faith or belief on certain people. The followers of various faiths had no clash or conflict among them. In the early stages, there developed a practice and philosophy based on '*nagpuja*' by Neelmuni and this form of worship was practised unhindered for a long time.

Buddhism

Buddhism came to Kashmir during the period of Emperor Ashoka in the mid 3rd century B.C. There was widespread propagation of *Boudh* principles. Accordingly, the bliss or happiness lies in renunciation, physical attainment is not truth, desire for material comforts never ends and *Ahimsa* (non-violence) is the best course or way of life. During Ashoka's rule, a large number of *Boudh vihar*, *muth* i.e. monasteries and temples were built. The Kashmiri *Boudh Bhikhshus* (devotees) travelled around the globe and visited many countries to teach and preach lessons of humanity. The *Boudh* faith spread in Kashmir but the '*Brahmins*' remained unaffected by its growth and they maintained the sanctity of their strict norms and rituals. To get support of the Brahmins, Emperor Ashoka too visited ancient temples and *Shivalayas* to perform 'puja'.

Shaivism

Kashmir is the place where 'Shaivism' made its first appearance. A large number of Hindus in Kashmir worship Lord Shiva. Shaivism, the soul of Kashmiri ethos, is based on the philosophy of *karmaphal* i.e. 'Actions determine outcome' and it advocates that 'yoga' and 'sacrifice' are the cornerstones of humanity and that Soul is immortal. The physical form i.e. the body acts upon the dictates of '*Maya*' and the final salvation is achieved

only through the destruction of 'Maya'. Lord Shiva's existence is seen as a family fold - Parvati as wife, Kartikeya and Ganesha, the Apostle of war and the Head of State respectively, as their sons. *Vrishabh*, the agricultural implement is His carrier. Water, the elixir of agriculture is present as 'Gangajal' on His forehead. His meditational and yogic *padmaasana*, though present in this world is beyond the worldly confines.

What is splendid about Shaivism? Born and developed in the land of Kashmir, it is the depiction of the entire human life, path of its progress and elevation. In Shiva's incarnation, one finds a complete synthesis of various aspects of life - household, agriculture, religious struggle, republic, yoga, spiritual growth, renunciation and training in arms. This is something unique found only in this scientific philosophy. It was this uniqueness which attracted people from all over the world.

The Centre of Learning

Shri Anand Kaul writes in his book, 'The Kashmiri Pandit' - "Since ancient times, Kashi and Kashmir were renowned for their educational system. But, with Kashmir surpassing Kashi, the scholars from Kashi used to come to Kashmir to complete their education. Even today, the people of Kashi send their children to Kashmir, on the occasion of '*Akshar Gyan*' and ask them to take seven steps in the direction of Kashmir wearing '*Janeyu*', the sacred thread of Hindus. '*Janeyu*' is considered an ominous symbol of visit to Kashmir. The land of Kashmir is the place of origin of the Indian culture. There is firm belief that Kashmir has played a significant role in spreading and propagating the Indian way of life all over the world.

The people of Kashmir are well-cultured and fond of learning. In Kashmir, education has always held a place of high eminence and prestige. Albruni, who visited Punjab alongwith Mahmud Ghaznavi in 1102, writes - "Kashmir is the most venerated school

for Kashmiri Hindu scholars. People from far off places, came to this place for learning Sanskrit and many of them were so enchanted by the pleasant climate and natural splendour that they chose to settle here permanently.”

A little away from Jammu, there was a noted Sanskrit college which was run for many years under the guidance and direction of Principal Pt. Purushottam Kaul. This college provided free education. It brings to the fore the uniqueness of the education-oriented aspect of Indian culture. Baba Srichand, the son of Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and founder of the *Udasi* faith got his education from this college. Mohammad Dara Shikoh, the Moghul Prince, too, came to Kashmir to learn Sanskrit.

Why are all Kashmiris called ‘Pandits’?

An important query arises – if people of different regions and classes came and settled in Kashmir, then why are all Kashmiris called ‘Pandits’? This question is linked to the cultural and spiritual legacy and also the social identity of Kashmir. Since the earliest times, Kashmir, known as the land of sages, *Rishis*, *muth*, temples, universities, centres of knowledge and spirituality, has produced great scholars and educationists of international acclaim. They all came to be known as scholarly Pandits. Anybody who possesses knowledge and disseminates it in the society is a Pandit. So, the racial identity of Kashmir, the land of knowledge became popular as the land of Pandits. All the rivulets, big or small, that merge into the holy river Ganga, assume the name of Ganga. The words ‘Pandit’ and ‘Kashmiri’ were so blended that the two became synonymous to each other.

The ‘Kashmiriat’ has a unique feature. It has treated all categories of people with respect and has no place for narrow considerations of caste, creed and social hierarchy. Kashmir has awarded the title of ‘Pandit’ to all its people – rich, poor, rural or urbanites. This aspect of Kashmiriat elevates it to the heavenly

echelon. Otherwise, like other places, Kashmir too had demographic-mix such as Brahmins, traders, warriors and *shudras* i.e. people looking after menial jobs. They all exist even today. Since ancient times, '*Kshatriyas*' continued to be the dominant ruling elite. Like *Kshatriyas* in other parts of the country generally use the suffix or title of 'Singh' to their names, in Kashmir they use the word 'Aditya' with their names such as Pratapaditya, Lalitaditya, Vajraditya, Baladitya, Ranaditya, Vedaditya, Vikramaditya etc. 'Aditya' signifies 'Sun'. Their lineage was 'Suryavanshi Kshatriya'. There are many Kshatriya families in Kashmir today, some of them might have, out of fear or personal reasons, converted to other faith and changed their original identity. but majority of them use their original *Goutra* or family-name. Lohar, Damar, Rathore, Nayak, Thakur etc are still commonly used names in Kashmir. The 'Lohar' and 'Damar' communities are in large number in the northern and southern part of the Kashmir respectively. '*Vaishya*', the business class are in good number, too, in the state, particularly, in Vora and Trambu areas of Sopar region. People employed in lower-rung jobs like *Kumhar* (makers of earthen vessels), *Chaamkar* (leather goods makers) etc. called '*Shudra*' also inhabit the state.

There is a proper blend of scholarly wisdom and *Kshatriya* gallant in the racial character of Kashmir. The most common *Goutra* (family title) found is 'Bhat' which comprises the dual characteristics. The word 'Bhat' means Brahmin or teacher i.e. one who imparts knowledge and education and also denotes the quality of a warrior or fighter, i.e. one who acts as saviour of the society from physical danger.

The word 'Pandit' is used for Kashmiriat or *Bhartiyata* which continued to impress, attract and educate the world scholars for 4,000 years. This word is the legacy of Kashmir, reminiscent of the ancient history of Kashmir – its cultural heritage, sacred rivers,

scenic splendour of lush green valleys and enchanting meadows as proof of Kashmir's ancient glory and magnificence.

In this context, Dr. Trilokinath Ganjoo writes in his book, "Maharishi Shiryabhat" – "The Kashmiri Hindus who escaped the Muslims' murderous intents and forced conversion did not belong to a particular *Varna* or caste. In fact, they comprised *Brahmin*, *Kshatriya*, *Vaishya* and *Shudra*. They were in such small minority that it was impossible to follow a social pattern on the lines of a well defined caste-based order (*Varna vyavastha*). In such a scenario, Maharishi Shiryabhat advised the people to form a classless social order. But *varna* had come to stay too deep in the socio- cultural mindset to pave way for a classless society. This made Shiryabhat to christen all Kashmiri Hindus into Brahmin *varna*. A close analysis of various Kashmiri castes unveils the entire plan of social order followed at that time. But this aspect has never been taken up by the historians".

What do the names of Rivers and Mountains denote?

Though there are vicious attempts being made to demolish the ancient and glorious character of Kashmir and *Kashmiriat* by defaming and distorting it. But it is quite clear that Kashmir had only 'Hindu' identity. *Kashmiriat* meant only Hindu culture. Today, those who are indulging in destroying this cultural legacy under the influence and control of foreign and blasphemous elements are themselves descendants of Hindu ancestors. Hindukush mountain is the crown of Kashmir valley as its very name indicates. Gripped by emotions, once Ashfaqullah Khan, the revolutionary and great patriot remarked, "My Hindukush has turned into *Hindukash* (the assassin of Hindu)". The whole mountainous range of Kashmir begins with Hindukush. The various mountains – Brahmashikhar, Harmukut, Mahadev, Gopadi, Chandanvan, Naubandhan and Nagparvat- are all Sanskrit names. The name 'Satisar' was given

to Kashmir by Gods. It was ruled by Neelnag who was the son of the Sage Kashyap, the Creator of Kashmir. While Kalhana, the historian, in his *Rajatarangini* calls Sindhu river as *Uttar Ganga*, it has been referred to as *Uttarmaanas* i.e. 'Gangbal' in *Neelmat puraan*. In its vicinity, lies ancient pilgrim spot, Nandi which is now known as Nandkot. Adjacent to this place flows the river *Kanakvahini* which is distortingly called as 'Kankai' river. The river Jhelum is vedic *vitasta*. On the banks of Krishna Ganga, another place of pilgrimage called Sharada is situated.

Likewise, there are several other places of pilgrimage viz. Amreshwar (Amarnath), Sureshwar, Tripureshwar, Harsheswar, Jyashtheyshwar, Shivbhuteshwar, Sharada and Saritshila. Which religion, faith or philosophy are these places related to? Or for that matter, places in Kashmir like Siddh path (Popularly called as Budil or Seedon), Panchaal (Pir Panjaal) Dugdadhhar (Dudukant) Zojila, Chintapani etc. Where do these names come from, their historical background or source? Varnier, the noted English historian recognises that Kashmir is associated with the Sage Kashyap. Muslim author Malik Haider also clearly spells out that it was Rishi Kashyap who inhabited Kashmir.

Rajatrangini

Rajatrangini, a great epical work in Sanskrit presents a well-documented historical account of more than 4,000 years. The historians who created this chronicle had a complete view of the series of events that took place in Kashmir. It is incredible that such a massive chronicle was developed and carried forward by numerous historians and authors over centuries like Kalhana, Jonraj, Shriwar and Shuk. In this exhaustive narrative, one can find the great contribution made by various leading social groups and communities like Boudh, Shaiv, Vaishnav, Pishach, Naag, Guhajak, Bhatta, Shia, Sunni, Syed, Chakra, Moghul, Pathan, Sikh, Dogra, Christian and Kashmiri people. Kashmir has been ruled with an

order influenced by different norms of administration. It is a perfect laboratory for deep analytical study of conflicting 'isms', opinions and philosophies.

Sati Desh

The remains of buildings and structures found in Kashmir are the ruins of schools, *math*, *viharas* (temples and monasteries) and places of deities. But there are no signs, whatsoever, of the luxurious and sumptuous life style of Kings, palaces of power and women's *harem*. The Hindu Kings who ruled the state never spoilt the peace and wellbeing of their masses for their own interests and fancies. As Kashmir had always been venerated as a land of *Sati* by the rulers, saints and sages, it dug deep into their psyche that causing trouble to the Kashmiri subject would amount to gross disrespect and dishonour to Bhagwati Sati.

The Rulers of Kashmir honoured the all conquering *Bhartiya* tradition and carried it forward. They handed over the administration of the regions they conquered to their people and did not treat them as colonies, nor did they demolish places of faith and worship and resort to conversion. They did not impose their authority by force. The Emperor Lalitaditya conquered a large region upto Middle East. He never took to luxurious and opulent life style. Kashmir has given great Emperors like Meghvahan whose military exploits conquered half of the regions of the world but these were returned to the people on the firm assurance that there will be no violence and aggression. He left the places handing over complete freedom of governance to the people. By sacrificing his own life for the larger good of the people, Meghvahan set up high ideals and raised the Kashmiri pride.

Sufism

With the advent of 14th Century 'Sufism' came into being in Kashmir. A Sufi Saint Syed Ali Humdani of Humdan came to Kashmir in 1372 along with 700 followers and disciples. Though

they came with the sole objective of converting Kashmiri people to Islam and they succeeded too, to a large extent, in their mission but the generous Kashmiris accepted their spiritual sermons and teachings as 'another flower in the huge vase'. Some of the main tenets and guiding principles of Sufism are meditation, austerity, self-control and purity of thoughts. According to Sufism, *Jihad* means controlling one's physical and material desires and fighting and eradicating the evils present within oneself.

How practical are the Sufi principles? Kashmiri people treated the Sufi Saints like their own 'Greats' and accepted their teachings as part of *Kashmiriat*. Though it is another aspect that the conversion of Hindu people to Islam that the Sufi saints brought about has become a festering wound on the body of *Kashmiriat*.

Rishi Cult

In the mid 14th century, *Rishi* cult was born in Kashmir. The teachings of Sanyasini Lalde and Sheikh Nuruddin gave rise to a spiritual organisation comprising a group of about 2,000 *Rishis* scattered all over the villages in the region. Abul Fazal, a Muslim saint who later embraced *Rishi* cult has said, "*Rishis* are the most venerated holy men in Kashmir. Though they have not given up the traditional forms and customs of worship yet they are sincere, devout and shun worldly desires. Pure vegetarian, they grow fruit-bearing trees for the people and lead a life of austerity and celibacy." The *Rishis*, no doubt, made Kashmir, a heavenly realm.



The Victorious Kashmir

Kalhana, the historian, takes pride in Kashmir's glorious tradition of *Kshatra* and indomitable spirit. Kashmir enjoyed independence for about 4,000 years holding its head high with dignity and honour by virtue of its inherent strength. The great warriors of this land never surrendered before the foreign aggressors. They fought gallantly and frustrated the attacks of the vicious tribes who tried to invade. Modern history is witness to the impact of Kashmiri valour far into Middle East. This awe-inspiring legacy of Kashmir's conquest can not remain unnoticed.

Gonand - I

The known historical account of Kashmir runs parallel to the *Mahabharat*. Kalhana, in his *Rajatrangini* has reckoned the beginning of political history of Kashmir with the advent of the Emperor Gonand-I. This period also signifies the coronation of Maharaja Yudhishtira. Likewise, the incidence of Jarasandh's killing which was part of the military action of Lord Krishna against the callous and atrocious kings, is simultaneous to the death of King Gonand.

Damodar

After the death of King Gonand, his son Damodar was

coronated strictly in accordance with the religious customs. Aghast at the death of his father, he even challenged Lord Krishna for war when Shri Krishna was participating in *Swayamwar* ceremony in Gandhar. Damodar schemed up a stunning attack on Shri Krishna but the latter, a great master of politics and warfare, thwarting his designs killed Damodar.

Queen Yashovati

How sensitive and concerned was Shri Krishna about the wellbeing of his people and administration of Bharat is illustrated by the fact that when, after the death of Damodar, the question of succession of Kashmir arose, Shri Krishna came up with the solution. As Damodar had no son or heir, Damodar's wife, Queen Yashovati was coronated. Yashovati was pregnant at that time and gave birth to a son in due course who was named Gonand. He was later known as Gonand-II. The kings of all the Indian states attended the coronation ceremony of Yashovati, which indicates that Kashmir had cordial relations with them. By that time, the family discord between *Kauravas* and *Pandavas* had turned into a major political conflict which finally culminated into *Mahabharat*, one of the greatest wars fought in human history, rightly known as 'mother of all wars'. In this Great War, Kashmir didn't take part partially due to the fact that Gonand-II was a minor and also, he was not approached for any alignment or support. Also, probably Shri Krishna intended to keep Kashmir away from the battle front and save this place of origin of *Bharatiya* philosophy from the war flames.

Domination of *Pandavas*

After the war of Mahabharat, the Pandavas ruled over Kashmir which is borne out by the historical evidence presented in *Rajatarangini*. Gopinath Srivastava writes in his book, '*Kashmir Samasya or Prishthbhoomi*' – "According to Kalhana, the historian, 35 Kings ruled the state of Kashmir after Gonand-II. As

all the written and documented records about them were destroyed, little is known about them. Kashmiri people believe that *Pandavas*, too, ruled over the state and out of the 35 kings, 23 belonged to the *Pandavas*. The ruins and relics of Martand and other temples are known as Pandavalari and Pandav Bhawan.

Even today Shankaracharya temples which were built by *Pandav* king Sandeepan in the valley can be seen in a dilapidated state. During Sandeepan's reign the frontiers of Kashmir spread from Gandhar to Kannauj. In this lineage there was a King Bhimsen who, on the strength of mighty armed forces conquered many prosperous regions of Middle East. During this era there is ample evidence of rule by *Pandavas* in Sanskrit scriptures which also indicates that there was uniform system of governance in the entire Bharat. *Rajatarangini* gives a comprehensive description of the political and social environment prevalent in whole of the country during that era.

The Emperor Ashoka

According to Kalhana, the Emperor Ashoka of Magadh (250 B.C.) brought Kashmir under his control. His empire covered a large area from Bengal to Hindukush mountains in Afghanistan. Ashoka built and inhabited the city of Srinagari. This ancient city is situated only 5 km. away from the present city of Srinagar. Obviously, new Srinagar is just a part of the old city of Srinagari. At that time, the capital of Kashmir was near Puranadhisthan which is now called as Pandrethan. A temple situated in that place is a mute witness to the glory that era possessed. The famous Chinese traveller, Hunsang who stayed in Kashmir for many years stated that during the reign of Ashoka, 5,000 *Boudh Bhikshus* (Buddhist monks) settled in Kashmir who had no conflict with the local people. Ashoka, a worshipper of Lord Shiva, built a temple known as Ashokeshwar Temple. The outstanding feature of Ashoka's love and sensitivity towards his subject is depicted in the creation of

16,000 shelters built for public. During his period, Kashmir, known as the centre of Buddhist philosophy became model of inspiration for the entire world.

Jalok, the Worshipper of Lord Shiva

Towards the fag end of Ashoka's rule, the fear of foreign invaders started lurking in Kashmir. By then, Jalok, Ashoka's son, had assumed power. Jalok, also a worshipper of Lord Shiva was a bold and courageous king. His stupendous military might and astute marshalling forced the foreign aggressors to keep away. Under his brave leadership, the Kashmiri soldiers defended the valley against the formidable foreign onslaughts.

Kanishka, the Powerful Emperor

After King Jalok, for about three centuries Kashmir remained under some kingship but it never had a competent ruler. Taking advantage of the fragile structure of power, the *Kushans* took over and brought the state under their sway. During the *Kushans'* rule three kings - Hushq, Jushq and Kanishq ruled the state, all of them were *Turks* by nationality. They built cities in their name i.e. Hushqpur, Jushqpur and Kanishqpur. Of the three, Kanishq or Kanishka was the most powerful King in terms of politics, diplomacy and military strength. Kanishka expanded his empire from north India to the far-flung areas of Middle East. The *Kushans* had absorbed during their stay in Kashmir, the shades of *Bharatiya* culture. King Kanishka even formally adopted Buddhism and declared *Boudh Dharma* (Buddhism) as the religion of state. He convened 3rd *Boudh Parishad* (conference) in Kashmir. Buddhism got tremendous boost during the regimes of Tushqa (Turk) kings spreading its wings in Srilanka, Burma and Jawa. During Kanishka's rule, it blossomed in Tibet, Central Asia and China. As per Kalhana, Buddhism expanded in Kashmir under Nagarjuna's supervision and direction and it was he who founded *Mahayaan*. Kanishkapur built by King Kanishka is now known as Kanisapur in the present

Baramullah district.

On the basis of the above facts, it can be deduced that with Kanishka following Buddhism, the process of Indianisation of *Kushans*' race and their merger with the Indian ethos got completed.

Mihirkul, the Callous Ruler

In the beginning of the 6th century (525 A.D.) the *Huns* conquered Kashmir and established their rule. Mihirkul, the leader of *Huns* was a callous ruler, known for his atrocities and ruthless governance. It was, no doubt, the tolerance and forbearance of our people that allowed Mihirkul to perpetrate his terror. In their initial aggression the *Huns* were defeated and their advancing march stopped by the Emperor Yashovarman, the great ruler of Malwa. Further, Baladitya, the Emperor of Magadh not only defeated Mihirkul but arrested him and sent him to prison. But on the instructions of the kind mother of the Emperor Baladitya, he was released later. Mihirkul, then went to Kashmir and took over the reins of power through political intrigues.

The Shaivism was so firmly pervasive in Kashmir that the worshippers of Shiva, by virtue of their organizational skill and efficient functioning, forced Mihirkul to follow Shaivism. He built a Mihreshwar temple which is now known as Mamleshwar Temple in Pahalgam. Thus, like *Kanishka* and his *Kushan* clan, Kashmiris made Mihirkul and *Huns* follow Shaivism.

The Talented Meghvahan

Kalhana, in the 3rd book of his *Rajatarangini* has mentioned about an accomplished and talented King Meghvahan who was born in Gandhar, a stronghold of Buddhism. Kanishka's efforts led to the expansion of Buddhism upto Afghanistan and Turkistan. Meghvahan, too, initiated a unique campaign for propagation of Buddhism. He resolved to oppose violence against the living creatures all over the world. He banned animal slaughter and proceeded to Srilanka to ensure effective implementation of this

law.

The *Dhwajdand* used in the flag hoisted on the government buildings in Kashmir was presented by the King of Srilanka to Meghvahan which is another example of unification of Bharat from the Himalayas to Far South.

King Durlabhvardhan

After Meghvahan, the rule of Karkota dynasty for a period of 254 years signifies a golden era in the glorious history of Kashmir. King Durlabhvardhan, the founder of this dynasty took the reins of Kashmir State in 625 A.D. This marks the beginning of 4th *Rajatarangini*. The historical account of Karkota royal dynasty is well documented. In the year 631 A.D. Chinese traveller, Hunsang who stayed in Kashmir for 2 years as a State guest, has described in his writings the reign of Durlabhvardhan, "The King of Kashmir had a formidable control over far off places like Takshila, Hazara, Poonch and Rajouri. Though a powerful king, having his writ over a vast state sprawling from Kashmir to Kabul, he was not fully independent. The Emperor Harshvardhan whose capital was Kannauj had, generally, authority over Kashmir. The economy of Kashmir was a good shape, with the valley having abundant prosperity. The Buddhism, too, was in the ascendancy in the state."

It is clear from Hunsang's account that the King of Kashmir came under the purview of the federal authority of Emperor Harshvardhan. The present-day historians should educate themselves from the above account, who take pride in stating that India never had a central authority.

King Chandrapeed repulsed the Arab invaders

Hailing from this Karkota dynasty, King Chandrapeed established an ideal and powerful regime in Kashmir. According to Gopinath Srivastava, King Chandrapeed was so powerful that even the Chinese King acknowledged his dominance. In 713 A.D. Chandrapeed sent an envoy to the Chinese King to get his support

in fighting the Arabs. He intended to set up rule of justice. It illustrates the all-conquering Kashmiri psyche and their firm resolve in displaying their prowess and at the same time exercising diplomacy in forging military alliance with China.

Kalhana has also delineated in *Rajatarangini* the status of justice and rights of the people in the state. Even people belonging to the lowest rung in the society enjoyed a dignified life.

Rajatarangini has narrated a beautiful short story-

'Once the King required a plot of land to build a huge temple. His officials surveyed the entire area and the piece of land found suitable for the purpose, belonged to a cobbler. He lived in a hut built on that piece of land. When the officials asked for his land, the cobbler refused to part with it. When it was brought to the notice of the King he stopped process of land acquisition immediately and went to the cobbler himself to request him to shift his hut in the national and public interest. The King convinced him that the building of temple was a matter of great significance and it was not advisable to come in the way of this noble task. The cobbler appreciated the issue and readily agreed to shift his hut at some distance.'

Emperor Lalitaditya, the Great Warrior

An icon of bravery and boldness, Emperor Lalitaditya Muktapeed holds the highest place in the history of Kashmir. His rule spanning over 37 years, is characterized by triumphant military endeavours, marvellous war preparations and willpower of a conqueror. Like Alexander, he had brilliant knack for engaging in battles with sustained skill, staying power and accomplishing victories with stunning military exploits. His military feats brought worldwide fame to Kashmir's gallant forces. Kashmir, during his tenure, became the most powerful state expanding from Tibet in the East to Iran and Turkistan in the West and from the Middle East Asia in the North across to Orissa and sea shores of Dwarika

in the South.

Emperor Lalitaditya was not only a great warrior and administrator, he was also an avid connoisseur of art and literature. A fine writer and musician himself, he had keen interest in other walks of life as well. During his time, various vocations like trade, art, painting, drawing, sculpture and also religion got due attention and encouragement. Proper avenues were created for their progress and growth. During his rule, there were no instances of revolt, strife, struggle or communal tension.

The most remarkable and memorable feature about King Lalitaditya, a *Suryavanshi* (Kshatriya) by caste, is the huge Martand Temple which he built in the honour of God Bhaskar Suryadev. The incomparable and spellbinding architecture of the temple is a rare spectacle in the world history.

Overall, Lalitaditya was a great Emperor and warrior as also an excellent administrator who left an indelible impression on the world history.

***Karamyogi* Emperor Avantivarman**

Known for his ideals of peace, development and justice, Avantivarman's 28 years' reign holds a remarkable place in the history of Kashmir. During his tenure, he was never engaged in any war and devoting all his efforts towards development launched various projects for improving public amenities in the state. With total commitment to progress and public welfare, he provided plenty of opportunities to people for their all-round growth and prosperity. He built many temples and monasteries in the state. The ruins of two temples viz. 'Avantishwar' and 'Avantiswamin' built by him are, even today, the reminders of the glorious past. A visit to Pahalgam is usually followed by visit to these two wonderful temples. Also, it depicts how the centres of faith and religious symbols of Bhartiya culture were ruthlessly destroyed by the callous *Yawan* Kings. The ruins and relics tell the tragic story of their cruel and

destructive mindset.

King Shankarvarman conquered Kabul

After Avantivarman, his son Shankarvarman took reins of the state. Unlike his father, who was not passionate about military endeavours, he concentrated on defence build-ups and intended to recapture and merge with Kashmir, the regions which were won during Lalitaditya's time. Determined to carry out his mission, he proceeded to conquer smaller states, one by one and finally reached Kabul. At that time, Kabul was under the rule of a Hindu King, Lalaiya. He was not supported by his people in the war against Shankarvarman. He was, eventually, defeated and Kabul came under the control of Kashmir. During Shankarvarman's period, the state of Kashmir became stronger, both economically and militarily. It is significant to mention that while it was Emperor Lalitaditya who provided strength and vigour to Kashmir's defence forces, it acquired economic well-being under Emperor Avantivarman. The period of Shankarvarman was characterised by Kashmir's all round progress and prosperity.

Sangram Raj brought Mahmud Gazhnavi to knees

King Sangram Raj, the great King ruled Kashmir from 1003 A.D. to 1028 A.D. Sultan Mahmud Gazhnavi, who had trounced Iran, Turkistan and some Indian states was defeated twice in Kashmir. He could not fight the brave Kashmiri forces and had to abandon his dream of capturing the valley. It was in 1030 that Mahmud Gazhnavi last attacked India.

Sangram Raj was well aware of the strategy and devious tactics of Mahmud Gazhnavi such as deceit, rape, demolishing religious places etc. Sangram Raj ordered strict vigil and security on the borders of Kashmir. The people in the border areas were given special training in arms so that they could fight the enemy in all circumstances.

Gazhnavi attacked Kashmir in 1015 A.D. He set up a military

camp on the border near a fort, Lohkot at Tansi. The news of Gazhnavi's aggressive intents reached Sangram Raj through the border surveillance and spy network. The Kashmiri army men marched under the command of a competent General Tung. Adjacent to Kashmir, Kabul was ruled by the King Trilochan Pal. He too arrived with his forces at the Tansi warfield. Gazhnavi's forces were surrounded from all sides. The war strategy of Gazhnavi was thwarted by the well-planned strategy of Kashmiri forces. After fierce fighting, the battlefield of Tansi was filled with the corpses of Gazhnavi's soldiers.

Though, having lost the battle, Gazhnavi conceded to the superior prowess of Sangram Raj but it did not refrain him from launching another attack against Kashmir. Again in the year 1021, he attacked with renewed strength and planning but was defeated. Stung by the earlier defeats and nursing his bruised ego, he was desperate to achieve his goal. But the formidable joint front of Kashmir and Kabul proved their mettle and defeated Gazhnavi again. Crestfallen as he was, Gazhnavi never dared misdemeanour again. A Muslim historian, Nazeem has written about this humiliating defeat of Gazhnavi in his book 'Mahmud of Gazhnavi' -

"Mahmud Gazhnavi launched another attack against Kashmir in 1021 with the same strategy to avenge his earlier defeats and salvage the lost pride, but the Lohkot fort again blocked his way. The one-month long consolidation of forces proved futile, the fear of total decimation demoralised him and sensing the likely outcome of the battle, he preferred to retreat. He acknowledged the superior and impregnable strength of Kashmir and it made him abandon his long cherished dream of conquering Kashmir."

King Trilochan Pal, the Brave Warrior

King Trilochan Pal, the son of King Anand Pal and the last scion of Kabul's royal dynasty was a capable ruler well aware of the Muslims' strategy. He fought and led the forces along with his

father. During various battles that he was engaged in, he successfully thwarted the powerful Muslim aggression. He was a deft commander equipped with an excellent expertise in the mountainous wars.

The valiant King Jai Singh

King Jai Singh, ruled Kashmir from 1128 A.D. to 1150 A.D. A man of firm resolve, he had weathered many struggles and hazards with courage. Quite concerned about the growing influence of Muslim power in the north of India and sensing the gravity of the impending danger, he maintained regular contact with the Heads of states adjoining Kashmir. He had several parleys with the King Govindchandra of Kannauj. He formulated his foreign policy based on the prevailing circumstances and succeeded in curbing the ascendancy of Muslim forces with the cooperation of neighbouring Hindu Kings. The foreign rulers, particularly Muslims had an evil eye on Kashmir. However, as a result of the lenient attitude and flawed re-organisation of King Harsha, a large number of Muslim soldiers and professionals had sneaked into Kashmir's administration and defence.

The liberal policy on Kashmir started eroding the traditional unity in the state. The symptoms of internal strife began surfacing glaringly and the venom of conversion showing up its colour everywhere. Such factors paved way for transforming Hindu Kashmir into Muslim Kashmir.



Conversion to Denationalisation (*Rashtrantran*)

There are many Muslim fundamentalists in Kashmir who believe that 5,000 years ago Hindus of Kashmir volunteered to convert to Islam and make Kashmir a Muslim state. It is a fallacy and brazen lie, a deliberate attempt to cover the issue with religious frenzy. The fact is that the numerous foreign invaders who came to Kashmir resorted to force and violence for large scale conversions. These invaders took full advantage of the ideal human values of hospitality and religious tolerance shown by Hindu Kings and subjects.

In the name of trade and commerce, fanatic religious preachers and combative Islamic invaders had started thronging Kashmir during the time of Kota Rani (1339 A.D.), the Hindu ruler of Kashmir, but it was after her rule, during the time of Muslim ruler Shahmir that the process of forced conversion of Hindus to Islam was intensified. A large number of Syed Muslims from Hamdan (Turkistan and Faras) forayed into the valley. Syed Ali Hamdani and Syed Shah Hamdani, the two fundamentalist Muslim leaders came to Kashmir in 1372 alongwith thousands of Islamic preachers. These people, with the active support of Muslim rulers reached

the far-flung villages and towns of the state and built mosques, *madarsas* and Islamic centres. Behind the façade of religious fervour, there was calculated move to carry out 'conversion' of Hindus of Kashmir. Syed Ali Hamdani, using the influence of a popular public figure Sanyasini Lalleswaridevi, began forced conversion in accordance with Islamic and Sufi customs. Humdani, by issuing a religious fatwa (order) on Sultan Qutabuddin, got implemented such Shariat laws as Islamic dress code, form of administration and unfurling of green Islamic flags atop all state buildings. The diabolic trend of torturing, tormenting and punishing the Hindus who raised their voice in protest, also got underway during this period.

Unfolding the fanaticism of the Syeds and their Islamic and imperialist designs of turning Hindu Kashmir into a Muslim state, a Muslim historian M.D.Sufi has clarified in his book, 'Kashmir' - "Syeds became very popular among the Muslim Kings who came under the former's influence. They set up various publicity centres where people used to be given free food and then forced to convert to Islam". In fact, this use of allurement later turned into an outrageous onslaught to carry out conversions of Hindus. It is an extremely deplorable scourge in human history that these converted Kashmiris not only cooperated with the foreign fanatic predators but they openly lent support to their mass conversion campaigns. The unabashed manner in which these converted Muslims helped the foreign fanatics in their mission, annihilating the age-old convictions and beliefs prevailing in Kashmiri ethos, forms the most abominable phase of Kashmir's history. They showed no remorse in destroying the legacy of their ancestors, in demolishing temples built by them and converting them into mosques. The Muslim rulers brought the educated Kashmiri Hindus into their royal courts and placed them in high positions in their ministries. Gradually, these people of high status were given *Jageer* (Fiefdom) and were

islamised as King Shamsuddin and King Saifuddin who wreaked gruesome brutality upon Hindus. Otherwise, how could a handful of foreign invaders have succeeded in casting their sinister spell on such a colossal nation?

It would be pertinent to dwell on certain instances of forced conversion in Kashmir to understand the background of independent Kashmiri *Rashtra*. In this regard, Muslim historian, Hasan, has mentioned in his book, 'History of Kashmir' - 'Sultan Sikandar Butshikan (in 1393) was the most dastardly oppressor of Hindus. He ordered that the Hindus who did not agree for conversion be asked to leave the state or otherwise may be killed. This resulted in huge number of people opting for conversion and many even fled the state in fear. There were many Brahmins who chose to be killed rather than compromise on dignity of life. As per an estimate, about 3 *Khyber* i.e. approximately 3 tonnes of *Janeyu* (sacred thread worn by Hindus) were burnt down by Muslim King Sikandar. Hazrah Amir Akbar was a witness to that incident. He advised Sikandar to stop the ghastly killing of Brahmins and instead impose *Jazia* tax (tax for being Hindu) on them. All the holy scriptures and books of Hindu faith were either thrown into the Dal lake or set on fire or even buried in the earth. The desperate Sultan Sikandar, out of sheer intolerance and hatred, destroyed a large number of temples in Kashmir which were architectural marvels on earth and symbols of art, culture and tradition. The rubble and remains of the demolished temples were used to build mosques and *khankahein*.

Jonraj, the second author of historical *Rajatrangini* states - "There was hardly any town, village or hamlet having Hindu temple or place of worship which escaped the Muslim onslaught. This grossly inhuman and cold-blooded callousness knocked out the Hindus' spirit and many of them even committed suicide."

Citing the barbarous misdemeanour of the Muslims, an English historian, Dr. Earnst writes in his book, "Beyond the Pir Panjal" -

"Sacks carrying 2 Hindus alive would be thrown into the river. They had three alternatives before them - Either accept Islam and become Muslim or face death or banishment or survive to suffer. This was the official dictat from Sikander". Muslim kings, with their depraved viciousness had set their evil eyes on Hindus' places of faith and spirituality. Syed Mohd. Hamdani advised King Butshikan that their drives of forced conversion would not bring the desired results unless they demolished the Hindu idols placed in the temples. These places were the source of inspiration and motivation for them. These are the places providing them stimulus and strength which might make them abandon Islam in future. Therefore, it is absolutely imperative to demolish these places of faith which bind them to the spirit of *Bharat Rashtra*. Sultan readily agreed to Syed's wicked proposal and set about launching the most detestable attacks against one of the finest creations of art and culture found in human history. Muslim historian, Hasan writes – 'At first, the world famous Martand Temple (*Surya Mandir*) of Matan (Kashmir) caught the attention of Sikandar. Having failed to demolish the temple even in one year, he, in sheer frustration, ordered to set the temple on fire. The foundation of the temple was fully excavated and the stones dug out. Such fiendish acts were unseen and unheard in world history. Those who did not accept conversion were slaughtered along with their families. Similarly, Vijveshwar Temple near Vijvihar and three hundred other temples in the vicinity were razed to the ground. According to Hasan, tonnes of stones and marbles excavated and removed from the temples were used for building mosques and *khanak*, which is now known as Vijveshwar Khanak.

This large scale pogrom of Hindus and extreme cruelty they were subjected to went unhindered through the regime of every Muslim ruler. But it was during Aurangzeb's reign that acts of nerve-racking barbarism and chilling savagery, unprecedented in the

history of mankind, were committed on a large scale. These included- imprisoning people on flimsy grounds, kidnapping, hanging, chopping limbs of humans, grabbing their property etc. During his 49 years' rule, Aurangzeb sent 14 Subedars to carry out his sinister designs, the most loyal of them all was Ifteqar Khan (1671 – 1675) who committed acts of extreme brutality to force conversions. Historian Mohd. Fak, in his book, 'History of Kashmir' writes - "The communal terror in Kashmir reached the peak. There was a systematic and well planned scheme to kill the Kashmiri Pandits for forcing conversions." A large number of noted Pandits of Baramullah were put in jail and subjected to torture. They would be chained, packed in bags and thrown into Jhelum and Dal Lake. When he was convinced that complete annihilation of Hindu race was impossible, he made their life extremely horrible by imposing Jazia tax. The poor Pandits found the survival awfully difficult and in sheer desperation were forced to accept Islam.

It is a long, never ending tragic tale of torture and humiliation for Hindu Kashmir. This black history of Kashmir which started in 1339 to deface and disfigure the beautiful valley reached another disgraceful turn of history in 1989 when mass deportation of lakhs of Kashmiri Pandits took place. That old process of Islamization of Kashmir is now being carried out by the present leadership in Kashmir. If the government of India does not wake up to the challenge and the Hindus do not unite and stand up in protest, the separatists' long cherished dream of making Kashmir an Islamic state will not take longer to become a reality.



The Glorious Past of Dogra Land

The entire Jammu region or the Dogra land, also called as land of Dogra warriors is known for its indomitable courage, bravery, self-esteem, dignity, self-reliance and patriotic spirit. In earlier times, one of the main provinces of Indian nation was one Madra *Janpad*, Jammu, which ranged, area-wise, from Sialkot in West Punjab (Pakistan) Pathankot, Gurdaspur, Kangra (H.P), Chamba, Kishtwar (J&K) Ramban, Poonch, Banihal to Muzaffrabad and Mirpur. Lying in the laps of Pir Punjal Trikuta and Shivalik valleys at the foot of the majestic Himalayan peaks, the people of this region have not only thwarted the misdemeanour of the foreign invaders but have also given shelter and succour to the people tormented and driven out by them.

Protection of the Sheltered

As per *Neelmat Puraan*, the history chronicle of Jammu & Kashmir, when Jalodbhav, the devil, set his assault on the Kashmiri people and drove them out of their homes, the people of Jammu region provided them food and shelter till the demonic onslaught of Jalodbhav was stopped by Kashyap, the founder of Kashmir. It is worth mention that in the present day scenario the people of Jammu have provided shelter and assistance to the patriotic people

of Kashmir who have suffered at the hands of the modern perpetrators of crime and violence. We must hope that this evil giant will meet its end and the nationalist people of Kashmir will return to their idyllic valleys and keep the spirit of *Bhartiyata* aloft. Hopefully, with the Divine intervention and graciousness, things will change for the better.

Dogras, the Staunch Nationalists

Like the glorious past of Kashmir which has been delineated in the previous chapter, Jammu, too, has a brilliant history. Like Kashmir which has produced great Emperors and warriors of the likes of Lalitaditya and Avantivarman, Jammu region has not lagged behind as it has also produced great warriors who have valiantly fought the invaders - Afghans, Moghuls and Europeans. The credit of finishing off the dream of conquering India, of the so-called world conqueror and hypocrite Alexander, the great, also goes to the gallant fighters of this land. The Dogras have always proved their mettle in defending the honour of Hindus and *Bharat Desh*. The legacy of bravery, sacrifice for truth and self-respect continues to this day.

Bahu Lochan and Jambu Lochan

Bahu Lochan and Jambu Lochan were the descendants of Kush, the Son of Shri Rama. Many historians have associated the ancient history of Jammu with the period of the *Ramayana*. King Agnibaran, the descendent of Kush, alongwith his aides, left Ayodhya and moved to the mountainous areas of northern India. The royal family of Agnibaran entered Kangra valley in Himachal Pradesh and settled in Parol area of Kathua, in Jammu & Kashmir. King Agnibaran's son Suryasarva captured some areas of Punjab and Himachal upto Jammu Tavi river. King Agnigarbh, the fifth descendent of King Agnibaran, took the entire region around river Tavi under his control and formed a formidable state.

After King Agnigarbh's death, his eldest son, Bahu Lochan

took over reins of the state. He selected the area on the left of the river Tavi for his capital. A new town and fort were built for the purpose which were later known as Bahu Nagar and Bahu Fort. Bahu Lochan, then, tried to capture the plains of Punjab but he was killed in the battle by Chandrahaas, the King of Punjab. Jambu Lochan, the younger brother of Bahu Lochan, now took charge of the state and initiated the task of expanding the frontiers of his state.

Co-existence of the Mighty and the Meek

Once, during one of his hunting adventures, Jambu Lochan saw an unusual thing on the bank of river Tavi. He found a lion and a goat drinking water side by side from the river. He had never witnessed such an amazing thing before. It made him curious to unravel this mysterious incident. He contacted some wise people in the region to find out the truth. They informed the King that in their region, there is complete harmony and peace among the people. Nobody thought about usurping the property of others. There is healthy respect among the people for each other's rights and freedom. The effect of humans leading such a pious and austere life also rubs on the animals in the region. The mystery was, thus, unfolded before the king.

Jambupura became Jammu

Amazed by the nobility and graciousness in the region, King Jambu Lochan declared the region on the right side of the river Tavi, as his capital. A city was built by the name Jambupura, which, with the passage of time, was known as Jammu. King Jambu Lochan took great care of Bahu Nagar and Bahu Fort, built by his elder brother, Bahu Lochan. Many historians are unanimous in their findings that the two great Kings built and inhabited areas falling on both sides of Tavi, later known as Jammu and Bahu, in the 14th century. There were many smaller states in Jammu province. Thus, the conglomerate of 22 smaller fiefdoms, the Jammu State became

famous as the land of valiant *Dogras*.

Dwigarta Republic (Jammu Pradesh) - Land of Brave People

Various Indian historians of the present era agree with the Greek historians about description of the Jammu region. Accordingly, the plains and mountainous range of Jammu region were divided into two states - Abhisar and Kithi Aui. Poonch region was called Abhisar and the area by the side of river Ravi came to be known as Kithi Aui, presently known as Kathua. Sialkot was the capital of Kithi Aui republic. Barrister Kashi Prasad Jaiswal, in his book, 'Hindu Polity' describing the land of Dogras as the land of valiant soldiers, writes, "In the Himalayan range alongwith Kangra and Jammu, there were six Trigarta republics, all of which collectively formed a federation called "Trigarta Shashtha". These six states were - Kondovpartha, Dandaki, Koshtaki, Jalamani, Brahm Mupta and Jalaki.

All the six Trigarta regions had a well-organised military force with every citizen being a trained soldier. The Republics of Dogras viz Kithi Aui and Sabhuti were collectively called as Dwigarta. In these states, military education was compulsory for all. These states were spread across the river Ravi in the East and Chenab in the West. As per their constitution, the people had the right to choose or dethrone their King. It shows how deep and old are the roots of the Indian democratic system and the way it nurtured the democratic values. The *Dogras*, known for their valour, had crushed the foreign aggression on various occasions.

Alexander, the World conqueror, killed by Dogras

The Dogras achieved the unique distinction of shattering Alexander's dream of world conquest on the strength of their bravery and courage, which became an important part of the history of Greece. It related to the period - 325 B.C. The Dogras fought the advancing Alexander and blocked his way in the Chandrabhaga

region. According to the historian Satreyo, the brave and courageous armed forces of Kithi Aui republic thwarted the forces of Alexander in Vasohli area in the foot of the hills. Before Alexander, they had defeated the states of Abhisar (Poonch) and Pauras (region falling between rivers Chenab and Jhelum comprised some parts of Jammu & Kashmir). The Dogras had prepared a specific strategy '*Shakti Vyuh Yudh Rachna*' to fight Alexander.

'Chandrabhaga' proved Nemesis for Alexander

The forces of Alexander were demoralised. When he reached the eastern bank of river Beas, the Dogra warriors blocked his way. V.D. Mahajan writes in his book, "*Pracheen Bharat*", 'The army of Alexander had returned to their country from the western bank of river Beas in the month of October in 325 B.C. after facing crushing defeat at the hands of Dogra army. The Dogras sacrificed their life for defending the motherland, displaying exemplary spirit of patriotism, religious fervour and self-sacrifice for the sake of honour. Historian Anil Bharati in his article – 'Killing of Alexander in the field of Chandrabhaga' describes very aptly, 'In the field of Chandrabhaga, a brave Dogra shot a poisoned arrow at Greek Commander, Alexander. This arrow was the symbol of retribution for India's honour. Alexander, hit by the arrow with blood gushing from his body, fell down. Soon thereafter, the Greek soldiers covered the unconscious commander with the shield. Badly injured, he was taken to his camp by the soldiers where he breathed his last.' It is for this reason that Greek historians and writers have called Chandrabhaga river as 'Sandro Fagus' meaning the river which devoured Alexander.

Unfortunately, the Indian history has been written in a manner that the great victories achieved by the Hindu warriors have not been highlighted with the appropriate portrayal whereas the defeats suffered by them have been exaggerated, so that the demoralising impact relating to their history alone stays in the memory. Calling

Alexander as the great warrior only highlights this prejudiced approach. In fact, when Alexander was defeated by King Porus, he was compelled to sign a 'Peace treaty'. Subsequently, Dogras dealt a crushing blow and destroyed Alexander and his army.

Turks, Moghuls meet their End

In the known history, since time immemorial, the Dogras with their unflinching faith in Hindutva, Indian traditions and national honour, have been fighting the foreign aggressors and invaders with pluck and valour. Like other regions of India, the Dogra history is also replete with highs and lows. In their history, there are many instances of gallantry displayed by the royal clans of 'Duttas', 'Roys' and 'Devs'. Similarly, Jamwal clan of Suryavanshi Rajputs and royal clans of Chadhak, Billowaria and Jasrotia have distinguished themselves for the security and progress of Dogra land.

The Kings from 'Dev' clan have successfully foiled the aggression of Turks, Moghuls and Afghanis. The Dogras have carved out a niche in the glorious history of India while fighting the foreign invaders with fearless heroism. They defeated Mahmud Gazhnavi twice who indulged in destroying and plundering various places of North India. Dogra Jamwal, the descendants of Devs ruled Jammu & Kashmir till 1947. In fact, royal clans of Dev and Jamwal played a tremendous role in consolidating 22 smaller states of Duggar region and setting up the Dogra empire.

Dogra's Self - Esteem Prevails

It is a historical fact that the Dogras, barring few exceptions, never accepted the authority of Turks, Moghuls, Pathans and even the English. Towards the end of 16th century, rulers of all the Dogra states tried to come together and forge a joint strategy to fight the Moghul Emperor, Akbar. Parvez Diwan writes in his book, 'History of Jammu State' 'All the rulers of the region, except Bahu King Paras Ram joined hands for the mission. Balbhadra of Lakhanpur,

Bazuarg of Jasrota, Daulat Ram of Kot Bhagwal, Pratap Singh of Mankot, Ram Krishan of Bilawar and various other Kings of the present state of Himachal Pradesh put up a valiant fight against the Moghuls under the command of Bidhi Chand Katoch, the King of Kangra. Though the joint front of Dogra rulers lost to the shrewd strategy and intriguing diplomacy of Akbar, but they continued their vigilant fight to maintain their independence and autonomy. The Dogras kept their heroic spirit alive and displayed superb willpower to sustain the struggle.



Baba Jitto - A Rare Precedent of Self-sacrifice

As delineated in a Dogri chronicle, Jitto was born in a semi-hilly village, Aghar, 6 km. from Katra (Jammu) in 1420. He was married to Maya who hailed from a nearby village. Unfortunately, she died, soon after giving birth to a baby girl. With this tragedy, for Jitto, the worshipper of Ma Vaishno, began sea of troubles and sufferings. His aunt Joja was an extremely cruel and selfish woman. She had only one plan in her mind – to get rid of Jitto and grab the entire ancestral property for her seven sons. Her sons, all fools and worthless, were also party to their deceitful mother's intrigue. They made the life of Jitto and his tender daughter Gauri miserable. They destroyed the ripe, fully grown crops of Jitto, scared away his cattle and made him object of ridicule and taunts. Once, the sons of Joja tried to push Jitto down the hill to kill him. But luckily he survived. Joja did not spare even Jitto's daughter. She would often be intimidated and scolded. Joja even tried to poison both father and the daughter. In this miserable state, Jitto thought of a person who was known to him – Rulho Luhaar of village Panjore, near Jhirri Shamachak (place where temple in the name of Baba Jitto and *Bua* Gauri exists) But in those days, journey from Aghar to

Panjore was quite arduous. Jitto undertook this tough journey in the extremely scorchy month of June in 1457. He also had with him a pair of bulls and a plough besides his daughter.

Rulho Luhaar – A True Friend

Rulho *Luhaar* extended warm welcome to his friend, Jitto. Aware that he has left his village and was in search of employment with some landlord where he could offer his farming services, Rulho took Jitto to one Dhaggi (Ambalia) of a town Amba Gadata. Dhaggi was a caretaker-cum-custodian of a landlord, Mehta Veer Singh Rukwal. Mehta Veer Singh, the maternal uncle of Jammu's ruler Ajab singh was also a senior officer in his administration. Jitto met Mehta Veer Singh. Mehta told Jitto – 'You are a Brahmin, we will assign you the job of looking after a temple and you make your living out of the offerings and donations received in the temple.' Jitto did not accept the proposal and seeing the arrogance in his nature, Mehta advised him to clean up a land of 9-10 *Kanals* in a nearby jungle and make it suitable for agriculture. Jitto was also asked to make an agreement under which he will cultivate the land and give $\frac{1}{4}$ of the produce to the landlord.

Jitto worked hard, levelled and cleaned up the land within a few days. He also worked on a nearby pit and made it suitable to be used as a water tank. As expected, the barren land was converted into a fertile piece of land fit for growing crops. His hard work and dedication brought him wide acclaim and respect from the people of the region. People believed that he was, undoubtedly, blessed with miraculous qualities and abilities.

Deceitful Landlord Mehta Veer Singh

The folklore says that the news of Jitto's hard work and how he converted barren land into a productive piece of land reached Mehta Veer Singh. Mehta's men also told their master that the gold-like granules which Jitto had grown were suited for the royal kitchens and not an ordinary farmer like Jitto. Mehta too realised

that he had committed a mistake in accepting $1/4^{\text{th}}$ of the produce under an agreement. But soon it occurred to him that the written agreement was in his possession. He destroyed the agreement and went to Jitto working in the fields. Seeing the heaps of wheat grains he turned greedy. Full of anger and greed, he ordered his men to take possession of half of the produce.

Jitto was taken aback by Mehta's behaviour. He reminded Mehta of the written agreement between them as per which he could take only $1/4^{\text{th}}$ of the produce. Mehta refused to accept the agreement. Jitto was totally shocked. He could not have imagined that such a respectable landlord of the region could stoop too low in his dealings.

Unique Sacrifice

It was the most testing moment for Jitto. He had to choose between complete surrender to the powerful and deceitful Mehta Veer Singh and laying down his life to protect his right and honour. This thought flashed in his mind like lightening. He rushed to his village Panjore. Mehta thought he was a poor Brahmin and had fled away out of fear.

Jitto reached his friend Rulho Luhaar's house, took a new dagger and rushed back to the fields. By then, Mehta's men had already filled half of the grains in the bags. Mehta's men were surprised to see Jitto coming back. As they got aside, cutting the strings of all the bags Jitto spilled the grains in the entire field. He, then, stood atop the heap of grains. Mehta was shaken in utter disbelief. He tried to play another trick, offering him the gold rings he was wearing. But Jitto shot back, "Mehta, your greed has no limit. You are wolf in a man's garb, you are a man eater in the habit of devouring human blood. Look, I am mixing my own blood in the heap of grains. Take the entire produce of wheat. Saying this, Jitto stabbed himself in the heart. His gushing blood flowed into the wheat grains. The whole atmosphere was seething in blood

and pain.

Thus, Jitto's sacrifice on the Purnima day, Vikram samvat 1515 (June, 1458) unleashed a new ray of awakening for 'rights' in the land of Dogras. Jitto's eight year old daughter Gauri immolated herself on the pyre of her dear father's body.

(Ramnath Shastri – Tavi Deepika November 1986)



Jhirri's Fair in the Martyr's Memory

'Duggar Ratna' Baba Jitto immortalised himself in the annals of history as a beacon of light, inspiration and guiding force for the entire class of workers and farmers who suffer untold misery and pain in the hands of the Landlords and feudals. A fair is held every year at Jhirri near Jammu in the memory of Baba Jitto. Two khatri brothers of Sialkot built a memorial in his name. They had seen the sacrifice of Baba Jitto and immolation of his young daughter. The *mohras* that they set up in the memorial are worshipped in this *Kartik purnima* festival.

Symbol of Duggar Valour -Veer Banda Vairagi

Rajput Ramdev, known for his bravery and sense of commitment, lived in a small village, Rakore in the state of Poonch. He was known as 'Arrow and Bow' man. In Samvat 1727 in the month of Kartik (1670 A.D.) Ramdev was blessed with a son, who was later known as Lakshman Dev. He grew up to be a bold and fearless man, with wonderful spark in his eyes and unusual glow on his face.

Once, he had erroneously killed a deer with an arrow. On being hit, the offsprings she was carrying in her womb came out. Moved by this incident, Lakshman Dev threw away his arrow and bow and became a *sanyasi*.

He went off to the south and started living like a hermit practising austerity. The fame of this young *sanyasi* spread far and wide in the region and he was now known as Madhav Das Vairagi. He wore saffron robe and went into deep meditation. Around the same time, the cruelty and misdemeanour of Muslims had increased in the northern India. In Delhi, for the protection of Hindu *Dharma* Guru Teg Bahadur sacrificed his life. His son Guru Govind Singh's

two young sons were brick-laid alive in the wall. Two more sons of Guru Govind Singh, both young, laid down their lives in the battle of Chamkor Durg. Madhav Das Vairagi already knew about these incidents.

Guru Govind Singh preached his followers to take up arms. He laid the foundation of '*Khalsa Panth*' to save 'Dharma'. He took up the task of awakening, preaching and organizing people. He was deeply hurt and agitated by the sacrifice of his father and two young sons. Around that time, Guru Govind Singh met the young *sanyasi* Madhav Das in a small hut on the banks of river Godavari. He was in deep meditation; there was a mesmerizing glow on his face which impressed Guru Govind Singh. After a while, Vairagi opened his eyes. Both, Guru Govind Singh and Vairagi had a good look at each other and a special bonding between the two took place. Guru Govind Singh told Vairagi, "You are engrossed in salvation in this isolated place. The nation is on fire, temples are being destroyed, children are being brick-laid alive in the walls, women, mothers, and daughters are being humiliated, Hindus are being forced to become Muslims. Don't these things cause anguish and pain in you? Don't you feel perturbed and shocked? Is your Dogra blood at peace in the midst of all that is happening? Do you prefer deep meditation in this isolated place to the pain and suffering your nation, society and community are passing through? Just think over it and decide for yourself, *Bharat Mata* (Mother India) is calling you."

Vairagi's face turned red with anger and disbelief. He fell down at the feet of Guru Govind Singh and said, "I am your servant from now onwards. Please give me order and guide me about what is to be done. I am the son of *Bharat Mata*. I will sacrifice everything for the sake of *Dharma*, nation and Hindu Honour. I'll not rest in peace till all the humiliation that has been heaped on our people is avenged."

Guru Govind Singh lifted Vairagi and embraced him. He, then came to be known as *Banda Vairagi*. He discarded his *dhooni*, the smoke of austerity, gave up his saffron robe and took up arrow and bow. A new saviour was born in him for whom, fighting for the honour of the nation and religion became his only way of worship and meditation. Arms became his companions.

This is how Guru Gobind Singh taught Vairagi the lesson of *Karmyog* (action) and motivated him to take up arms to protect his faith, religion and the nation. Vairagi was 36 year old at that time. In the month of *Shrawan* in Samvat 1764, Vairagi, alongwith his entourage, travelling through Khanda and various other places, reached Hisar, by which time he had raised a small group of volunteers to join his mission.

First of all, he decided to punish the Nawab of Sirhind who had ordered the gruesome killing of Guru Gobind Singh's sons. In *Jayeshth* of Samvat 1764, he attacked Sirhind. In the fearsome battle, the brave soldiers of Vairagi fought hard and destroyed the forces of Nawab. Those who survived ran away leaving behind their arms and ammunition. Vairagi took out his sword and unleashed a ferocious attack on the Nawab's forces. Seeing Vairagi's total domination in the battle, Sikh army launched its fierce attack on the Sirhind army. The brave Sikhs inflicted heavy casualties in the ranks of Pathans. Wazir Khan tried to escape but he was caught by Vairagi's soldiers. Vairagi's mission had been achieved. To avenge the brutal killing of the Guru's two sons, he ordered that the city of Sirhind be destroyed. Wazir Khan, with his face blackened was paraded in the city in a large procession; he was kicked, abused and thrown into a burning pyre.

At last, Muslim rulers resorted to intrigue and guile to redeem the situation. They spread rumours of differences between Vairagi and the Sikhs. In Samvat 1773, a grand Baisakhi fair was held in Amritsar. Vairagi and Sikhs from all over the country joined the

celebrations. An anti-Vairagi party called '*Tat-Khalsa*' was formed.

To hurt and humiliate Vairagi, they looted his people which posed an awful situation before him. He maintained his composure. proceeded cautiously and decided to re-organise his force. He made a solemn resolve to attack Lahore and fight a decisive battle of his life. To execute his plan, he anchored his forces in Baghbanpura near Shalimar Gardens. On learning this development, Suba-Lahore (Lahore's Administrator) Aslam Khan was shaken. He tried to get the *Tat-Khalsa* force on his side and approached them for support. Tat Khalsa despatched an army of 5,000 sikh soldiers under the command of Sardar Mir Singh to aid and assist Aslam Khan. Vairagi's army pounced upon Suba's forces and inflicted a crushing defeat. A large number of Suba's soldiers fled away. Aslam Khan immediately pushed the Tat-Khalsa soldiers on the war front. Though Vairagi's forces were highly motivated and strong. But when Vairagi saw Sikh soldiers facing him, he was shocked. He withdrew his men as his conscience was in total disarray.

With a heavy heart, Vairagi returned to the fort of Gurdaspur along with his men. In Samvat 1776, a huge force of 30,000 soldiers led by a brilliant commander Abdul Samad Khan, proceeded to crush the forces of Vairagi. Armed groups of soldiers from Lahore and Jalandhar moved towards Gurdaspur fort. All passages to the fort were blocked. Vairagi, determined to sacrifice his life, ordered to open all the gates of the fort. As soon as the gates were opened, the Muslim army barged into the fort. Vairagi's army surrendered. Vairagi and his deputies were caught and brought to Delhi tied with heavy chains. The Kazi of Delhi pressurized Vairagi and his men to accept Islam. But none of them succumbed to the pressure. Having failed in his coercive methods, Kazi decided to kill 100 people daily and thus commenced the mass slaughter in front of the Kotwali.

The people of Delhi were stunned to see how Vairagi's men were laying down their lives with smile on their face. On the eight day, it was the turn of Vairagi to be killed and a large number of courtiers assembled to witness the scene. Even in the last moments of his life, there was captivating glow and Divine calm on his face. King Farukhsear too reached the spot to witness the sacrifice of Vairagi. The King asked Vairagi, "What kind of death you would like to have?" Vairagi replied, "You can take away my life the way you like. I am Vairagi (a detached person). I am a Hindu having firm faith in the immortality of soul." The King was perplexed to hear this. As per his order, spears carrying heads of Vairagi's men were put around him. First he was asked to kill his own four year old son which he refused to do. Showing gruesome brutality, Vairagi's son was killed before his eyes and then his heart, still throbbing, was thrown at Vairagi's face. Then the King ordered his men to pierce Vairagi's body with red hot spikes and pull out pieces of flesh. The body of Vairagi was reduced to skeleton. But he did not raise a cry.

This grisly sight sent shock waves among the people. The King, then, ordered that Vairagi be crushed by the elephant Kas and his order was complied with immediately. The news of ghastly manner of Vairagi's death reached far and wide spreading a fresh wave of awakening among the people. The Sikhs who alienated themselves felt ashamed and regretted their action. Hindus and Sikhs joined together once again.

Dr. Shyam Sunder Tripathi
(*Hamare Rashtra Nirmata : Part- 1*)



The Victorious Commander, General Zorawar Singh

In the hall of fame of great men and warriors that the land of Dogras has produced, one such illustrious name is of General Zorawar Singh. He is held in high esteem not only by his descendants and heirs but the entire Dogra race. He was the only General who merged together the fragmented states of India. Zorawar Singh, son of Thakur Harjeet Singh was born in 1794 in Kalhuria clan in village Ansar of Tehsil Hanirpur in District Kangra.

Unique Rajputi Brilliance

From his early age, Zorawar Singh was known to be a mischievous boy, nicknamed '*Baikhadi Jagat*.' In those days, horse-riding, archery, fencing etc. were considered essential feats for Rajput youth. Zorawar Singh was an accomplished master in all these feats. When he was 20, accompanied by two of his friends, he went to Lahore and joined Maharaja Ranjit Singh's army as 'Sepoy'. One day, after a heated exchange with an officer for smoking, he lost his temper and in a fit of rage, killed the officer. All the three friends, then, fled from the scene.

They kept wandering in the jungle, without food or water. At

last, they reached Kangra and joined the army of King Sansar Chand (Katoch) In those days, Maharaja Ranjit Singh and King Sansar Chand did not have the best of relations. Soon, the war broke out between the two Kings. Sansar Chand was defeated. Zorawar Singh was arrested and kept in the Dera Gopipur fort. The river Beas flowed right beneath the fort. One night, Zorawar managed to untie his shackles and jumped into the river.

The Brave write their own Destiny

The brave and courageous are proud of their strength and don't get bothered by their enemy even in the toughest times. Such great men of firm resolve are blessed by Gods. Zorawar found a broad wooden log in the river which took him slowly and steadily to a village called 'Bangata'. He had a friend, Dharm Singh in this village. Both of them decided to join the *Jattha* (band) of Mian Dido. Besides, three more friends - Bhikham, Chokus and Musanda too joined them. All the five proceeded to Jammu. They wanted to go to Jagati, the place where Mian Dido lived, but instead they reached Dhonthali Jammu. At this place, Zorawar Singh first met Raja Gulab Singh. Sensing that they were in search of employment. Gulab Singh recruited them in his army. After some time, Zorawar was posted in Bhingarh fort at Riyasi. It was at this juncture that his stars shone brightly as he became famous all over the region. The Chief of Bhingarh fort was hatching a conspiracy against Gulab Singh. Realising the gravity of what was emerging, Zorawar threw him down the fort's minaret. This incident brought Zorawar Singh closer to Gulab Singh. Once he suggested Raja Gulab Singh how the excessive expenditure being incurred on food and supplies could be curtailed. Raja-Gulab Singh agreed and this task was assigned to Zorawar Singh. Through his sagacious way of working he showed huge profit. Thus, having won the King's favour in a short span of time, he was made *Hakm-e-ala* (Head) of Kishtwar.

Dogra Army's first attack on Ladakh

This group of armed Guards crossed 'Motokol' and reached Suru valley of Ladakh. When King Gialpo of Ladakh knew about it, he panicked. In the autumn of 1833, both the armies engaged in fierce battle in which Ladakhis were defeated. They suffered heavy loss of men and material. Dogra army took control of the Karatsekhar Fort on the bank of river Suru. There is sprawling river on the one side of narrow passage at a place called 'Lankar Sau' and on the other flank there is a steep hillock. At this place, the Ladakhi army blocked the march of Dogra soldiers. The situation became critical. Zorawar Singh sent Mian Nidhan Singh to sneak into the enemy's forces in the dark of night. He beheaded the Ladakhi General which threw their ranks into total chaos. The Dogras won the battle. King Gialpo conceded defeat and agreed to pay annual tax of Rs. 15000/-. But when Zorawar's men reached Leh to receive the money, they were brutally murdered and their bodies thrown down the 'Tharkit' bridge. By this time, the winter had set in. Zorawar Singh led his forces to the Suru valley and waited for autumn season. As the autumn set in, Zorawar Singh proceeded to Leh and launched a fierce attack against the Ladakhi army. Ladakhis surrendered without a fight and Gialpo apologized for his past deeds and accepted all the terms and conditions of surrender. Gialpo was again installed on the throne and Zorawar Singh appointed Munshi Daya Ram as his Lawyer in Gialpo's court and returned to Jammu.

Zorawar Singh's forces again reach Ladakh

Hardly had the Dogra forces left Ladakh, when the Ladakhis again rose in revolt. It was conveyed to Zorawar Singh when he was proceeding to Janskar. He crushed Janskar revolt and moved to Leh. This time he followed the route via Padaar. Mashir, who fed Gialpo with misleading information fled. Gialpo again apologized to Zorawar Singh. Showing his benevolence, he again forgave

Gialpo, but he was dethroned and given some property (*Jageer*). Thus ended the rule of Gialpo on Ladakh. Zorawar Singh moved to Jammu after posting 300 Dogra soldiers in Leh under the command of Dalel Singh. A fort was also built in Leh for settlement of the soldiers which is situated near the Sangtu rivulet.

On the way, Zorawar Singh had to fight other chieftains of Suru valley. They possessed *Jageers* (property) given by the Wazir. They stood up in revolt which led to confiscation of their properties. Zorawar appointed a manager, Rahim Khan for supervising the entire region and returned to Jammu.

In Jammu, Zorawar Singh was given a warm welcome. He spent five years in Jammu in peace. As he achieved success after success and expanded his domain, the number of people bearing grudge and jealousy against him also rose. One of them was the Governor of Kashmir, Maha Singh. While he started instigating King Gialpo of Ladakh, Rahim Khan too revolted and joined Maha Singh. The Commander of Kargil Fort, Thakur Nidhan Singh was killed along with some Dogra soldiers.

The Dogra *Thanedar* (Police Officer) of Ladakh was shabbily treated. The people of Purag refused to pay tax to Dogra officers. In 1839, Zorawar Singh launched his third mission.

Ladakh won over third time

Maharaja Gulab Singh extended to Zorawar Singh an extremely warm send-off from Jammu giving him a large posse of 5,000 Dogra soldiers. In this mission, Zorawar Singh again won Chamba, Joja and Padar. In Padar, he built a new fort and named it 'Gulabgarh'. When Gialpo heard about Zorawar Singh's advancing further, he got scared. He tried to run away to Spiti but was caught. To perpetuate the royal family of Ladakh, Tindhal Namgil was made new Gialpo of Ladakh without any honorarium. For his residence, he was given the royal palace of Ladakh.

Simultaneously, the relations between Sakardu's King Ahmed Shah and his son Mohammad Shah soured. The latter requested Zorawar Singh for help. With 7,000 Dogra Soldiers and Ladakhi army, Zorawar Singh proceeded to take on 20,000-strong Balti army. Facing unusual hazards, mountainous terrains, scarcity of food and freezing cold, the Dogras fought with grit and determination. The Balti army was defeated at a place called "Thabu Khoon".

Ahmed Shah panicked and hid himself in Sakardu fort. Surrounded by sea, this fort was considered an 'impregnable place'. Bazir tactfully called out Ahmed Shah and took him captive. Mohammad Shah was installed on Sakardu throne. People from all over the region came in large number to pay offerings to Zorawar Singh and accept his authority.

After the victories of Ladakh and Baltistan, several forts were built which were safeguarded by Dogra soldiers. Zorawar Singh devised a plan to attack and conquer Lhasa. For this mission, Khaploh King Daulat Ali Khan offered his help to Bazir who led an army contingent comprising 5,000 Dogras, 5,000 Baltis and Ladakhi soldiers and moved to Lhasa. The entire army was divided in two groups under the command of Mian Ram Singh and Zorawar Singh.

Both the groups met near Roduk on the Tibetan border. Roduk was surrounded. Tibetan army's strength was quite meagre. After a brief exchange, Tibetan commander was killed and his men surrendered. Roduk was taken over by Dogra soldiers. Further, at a place Ganga, Lhasa forces put up a fight but could not last longer and were defeated. Now, the Dogra soldiers headed towards Mansarovar lake. They did not face any resistance from the Tibetan army on the way. Zorawar Singh camped his forces near one of the three rivulets coming from the Kailash Mountain. On one dark night, Tibetans launched a sudden attack at Shanta Kapin. After

heavy fighting Tibetan army had to retreat.

The Dogra army then moved to Mansarovar, a prominent place of pilgrimage for Hindus. It is learnt that once upon a time, great Emperor Mandhata's empire was spread up to Tibet. A mountain, on the bank of Mansarovar lake, known as 'Gurta Madhata' appears to be named after him. On the other side, lies Lord Shiva's *Kailash Parvat*. For the new generation, it is quite strange that India was such a vast country. Zorawar completed *parikrama* i.e. circumambulation of Mansarovar Lake in 3 days. Tibetan army again set up its camp at Taflakher ground. This place is at a distance of 15-20 kms. from Nepal border. The King of Nepal sent congratulatory messages to Zorawar Singh. The British government was annoyed at the activities of Zorawar Singh. They played dual game – on the one hand, they cautioned him through Col. Cunningham about the impending winter, while, on the other, they supplied information about his activities to the ruler of Lhasa. When the Lhasa government came to know that Zorawar Singh is not proceeding beyond Mansarovar and is rather lanning retreat they decided to block his way.

The Tibetan army was three times of Zorawar Singh's strength. The cold weather was in full swing. The ration stock was diminishing. The physical condition of Dogra troops was on the decline. In the field of 'Toye' both the armies fought for 3 days. The Dogras would have gained an upper hand but for the mistakes committed by Zorawar Singh. Even otherwise, luck was deserting him. He came to the war front to motivate his forces and was shot in the leg in the exchange of fire and fell down. He kept fighting with the sword until a Tibetan soldier hit him from behind with a spear. For the great Duggar commander and leader, journey came to an end on the fateful day of December 12, 1841.

The news of Zorawar Singh's death reached Jammu one and half month later. There was national mourning in the royal palace.

It was a great loss to Maharaja Gulab Singh.

Zorawar Singh had three wives. A few days before his death, his first wife had expired. As the news of Zorawar's death reached them, his two wives, Lajwanti and Asha Devi decided to immolate themselves in accordance with *satitva*. When Maharaja Gulab Singh came to know about it, he sent his elder son Udham Singh to stop them from self-immolation. Lajwanti was saved in time but Asha Devi, the other wife set herself on the pyre and ended her life as a 'Sati'.

Thus ended the saga of a brave General Zorawar Singh. Though he kept fighting and achieving victories but he could not establish a stable empire. This valiant warrior achieved immortality by dint of his resoluteness and determination to regain the lost glory of Indian nation. Such men of rare virtues never depart, they become legends and always rule the hearts of people. The mothers will keep telling their children the stories of Zorawar Singh's bravery and pride.

Shiv Dev Singh Manhas

(Tavi deepika - October, 1986)



There is a Palace of Zorawar Singh at Vijaypur near Riyasi. The *Kursinama* of his family is still in the safe custody of Thakur Pritam Singh of Vijaypur, the descendant of Zorawar Singh.

Patriotic Dogra Rulers

The large scale conversion of Hindus which started in the period of Shahmir continued unabated for 500 years right upto the last Afghan Subedar Azam khan. The Hindu Kashmir had turned into a Muslim Kashmir. During these dark years of history the most horrible means and the nastiest methods were used to demolish the Hindus. But the ruthlessness and cruelty of these rulers could not crush the basic social fabric of Kashmir. The Kashmiri Pandits continued the legacy of sacrifice for 500 years and protected the Indian values in the face of grave dangers.

Patriotic Pandit Birbal

The affluent Pandits of Kashmir decided to save the Hindus and Kashmir. With this objective, a crucial meeting was held in which it was decided to seek the support and advice of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Pandit Birbal Dhar, an eminent person known for his political shrewdness was deputed to meet the Maharaja for the purpose.

Subedar, somehow, got the wind of this significant meeting. He immediately called Mirza Pandit to enquire about what was happening. Acting very tactfully, Mirza placated the Subedar. By this time Pandit Birbal, left along with his son King Kak. Both, the

father and son stayed at Devsar. With the help of local Muslims both of them succeeded in crossing the Pir Panjal mountain. This daring act of Pt. Birbal and his son, with the help of Muslims, was quite irksome for Subedar and Muslim courtiers. As soon as this news of their escape spread, Subedar Azam Khan ordered his soldiers to look for the father and son. Every inch of the state was searched but in vain. He was so enraged that whosoever came before him was put to sword. When he became tired of frenzy of killing he ordered that all the women of Pt. Birbal's clan be brought to him.

Brave wife puts 'Tilak' on departure

When Pt. Birbal met his wife before leaving, she gave him tearful send-off and inspired him to march forward on the path of national duty. She assured him of her own willpower to face trials and ordeals of life with boldness and truthfulness. Holding her husband's hand, she took '*Bhishma*' pledge that she would not hesitate to sacrifice her life to protect her honour. This must be a great moment of overwhelming emotions in a couple's life when the sense of commitment and sacrifice knows no bounds.

King Kak, the young son of Pandit couple touched his mother's feet to seek blessings. She embraced her son knowing that it could be their last meeting. The bold mother, then, gave her son's hand into her husband's. While leaving, Pt. Birbal assigned the task of security of his family to a trusted Muslim friend, Kadis Khan Gojwari. Therefore, both the women, *Saas* and *Bahu* (mother-in-law and daughter-in-law) left for Kadis Khan's house.

Immortal Sacrifice

Subedar searched every corner of the region and tried every trick at his command to locate the two women of Pandit Birbal's family but without success. Kadis Khan did his best to keep them under cover. But he was deceived by luck. The selfishness and wickedness of one of his friends spoil the plan as he informed the

Subedar about the two women's hiding place. The house of Kadis Khan was surrounded by the security staff. Still he tried his best for their safety but was killed by Subedar's men. Both the women were arrested.

When Subedar's men were taking the two ladies to the King's court, Pt. Birbal's mother swallowed a diamond. But her daughter-in-law could not attempt the same. When they were brought before Subedar, the wife of Birbal looked furiously at Azam Khan and roared like a lioness, "The immoral and depraved ruler's reign of terror against Kashmiri Pandits will end and the Afghan rule will also bite the dust. My husband and son have already reached the palace of Maharaja Ranjit Singh". Hardly had she finished her words, she breathed her last.

But the wife of King Kak and the daughter-in-law of Pt. Birbal was sent to Kabul with an Afghan commander. How vastly different are the two civilizations, the two diverse cultures! History is witness to the incident when Maratha soldiers defeated a Muslim Subedar of Kalyan, near Pune in a battle, his arms, ammunition and the fort came into the possession of Marathas. They brought the young wife of Subedar before Chhatrapati Shivaji. Shivaji scolded his soldiers and warned them to desist from such abominable acts in future. Then, he, addressing her respectfully as 'Ma' (mother) sent her to the Subedar with gifts of ornaments. What a great difference between the two cultures, two civilizations!

Father and son reach destination

Pt. Birbal Dhar and his son King Kak reached the royal court of Maharaja of Jammu, Gulab Singh. They were sent to Lahore with a letter of recommendation to Raja Dhyani Singh, Prime Minister of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Their meeting was arranged with Maharaj Ranjit Singh. Pt. Birbal narrated the woes of Kashmiri Hindus to Maharaja who heard them patiently. He was quite perturbed to know the agonies being faced by the people of

Kashmir. He was pained at the grave situation faced by 'Hindutva' and 'Bhartiyata' in Kashmir. As a true Sikh, he felt the need to view the entire problem in the national perspective. After consultation with his courtiers and ministers, he ordered military assistance to Pt Birbal immediately, with men and material. He advised Pt. Birbal to accompany his army commanders and provide them necessary inputs about the geography of the region. Pt. Birbal accepted Maharaja's advice and asked his son to stay in the Lahore royal court as 'surety'.

Victory campaign of Sikh Army

Maharaja Ranjit Singh sent 30,000 soldiers alongwith five distinguished commanders under the overall command of Pt. Birbal. Great warriors like Jammu's King Gulab Singh, Hari Singh Nalwa, Jawala Singh, Hukam Singh and Shyam Singh put up a brave fight and trounced the army of Zabar Khan. He fled the battlefield. The Sikhs won the battle and the atrocious rule of the Afghans came to an end. On 20th June, 1819, Pandit Birbal along with the Sikh army entered Srinager as a victorious King.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh ruled Kashmir for 27 years. During this period, 10 Governors were appointed in Kashmir. The administration was liberal. The wave of oppression of Muslims against the Hindus came to a halt. The Muslim fiefs or *Jagirdars* who had unleashed a spell of terror against the Hindus persistently now fled. Hindu women enjoyed freedom and dignity. The prayers and religious festivities in the temples rejuvenated the whole atmosphere. It seemed return of the golden era.

Maharaja Gulab Singh

Maharaja Ranjit Singh, during his own life time, installed Gulab Singh as King of the state. But under the Amritsar treaty effected after Anglo-Sikh war of 1846, the Britishers, though accepted the rule of Gulab Singh over Jammu-Kashmir they claimed from him the compensation of the war with Sikhs. A British agent was also

posted in the state. In fact, the Britishers, through their agent kept Raja Gulab Singh under their control.

Zorawar Singh, the Brave General

Maharaja Gulab Singh, on the strength of his military campaigns and political influence merged many smaller states and formed a formidable state of Jammu & Kashmir. Aided by an efficient commander and a deft specialist in mountainous battles, General Zorawar Singh, Ladakh was also merged with Kashmir. This gallant General achieved martyrdom fighting in the battlefield. Paying tribute to his shrewd war strategy, noted historian, K. M. Pannikar writes, "Taking armed forces, not once or twice but 6 times to high altitude areas like Ladakh and snow-clad Baltistan, with the air supply being so thin and life-sapping, was an amazing feat. It was a stupendous task to launch attacks after attacks and bring the region under control. This is the rarest war accomplishment in Indian history. General Zorawar Singh's name, as a great warrior and superb strategist, will shine in the annals of Indian history.

Maharaja Ranvir Singh

After Maharaja Gulab Singh, his son, Ranvir Singh was crowned as the Maharaja of Jammu & Kashmir. Having keen interest in Hinduism, Sanskrit and Indian culture, he was held in high esteem and remembered as an ideal Hindu King. During his time, many centres for learning Sanskrit and libraries were set up and efforts made to revive the great traditions of Hindu values. It was during his time that a 'Dharmarth Trust' (Trust for Religion) was established to oversee construction of temples in the region. These initiatives brought in a wave of Hinduism in the state, with renewed energy, freshness and awakening among the Hindus. The Kashmiris were very eager to see their glorious past return.

The effect of this awakening of 'Hindutva' was so profound that many converted people in the state even contemplated returning to the religion of their ancestors. Many Rajput Muslims of Rajouri,

Poonch and Kashmir approached and implored Maharaja Ranvir Singh to allow them re-conversion to their original Hindu dharma. But, so unfortunately for our nation that in such rare moments of history, some self-styled leaders with vested interests, put hurdles and stalled the positive moves. When the King consulted Pandits about re-uniting the 'brothers separated by fate', they categorically rejected the proposal. These very Pandits, by denying Rinchan's admission into Hindu fold, allowed the state to be mauled and marauded by the Muslim rulers for 500 years! Now again when Muslims wanted to return to the Hindu *dharma*, these Pandits with their narrow-minded attitude blocked their way.

If Maharaja, at that time, instead of following the advice of these Pandits had allowed re-conversion into Hindu *dharma*, it would have solved the problem for ever.

Maharaja Hari Singh

After Ranvir Singh, his son Maharaja Pratap Singh and after him, Maharaja Hari Singh ascended the throne of the state. This young Maharaja, soon after coming to power, brought about various constitutional reforms. Deeply influenced by the Indian culture and Hindutva, he was a great patriot. His intense patriotism came to the fore when in 1931, representing Narendra Mandal (Chamber of Princes) in Round Table Conference held in London, Maharaja demanding complete independence for India, categorically declared, "This is the first occasion when Kings of the Indian states have assembled here to hold talks with the representatives of British government and British India to deliberate on the political future of India. As Indians, we want that our motherland occupies an honourable and equal status in the British Commonwealth."



Sangh in Jammu Region

The ever increasing expansion, rising impact and glorious status of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) as witnessed today is quite amazing and awe-inspiring. But how this great organization has blossomed into the present hallowed state, overcoming innumerable hazards and hurdles is indeed, incredible. The present scenario of the 'Sangh' in the relatively relieved and relaxed environment may not make one believe the challenges and strains it has endured in the formative years.

Retracing the initial phase of RSS, there was no office or *Karyalaya*, no '*guru dakshina*', no swayamsevak and no supporter. Also, there was no facility for food, shelter and worse still, it was considered ridiculous to call one 'Hindu'. It was in these critical times that Dr. Hedgewar planted a sapling of 'Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh' in Nagpur. After striving for years, he created tens of Dr. Hedgewars who went to every nook and corner of the country to organize and strengthen Hindu Samaj. Crossing barriers of language, custom and culture, these patriotic people with ample grit and determination, renouncing their home and hearth, kith and kin, faced fierce obstacles and carried forward the Sangh's work. Their willpower to carry on their mission knew no bounds. A

Shakha in the Jammu region started under such trying circumstances. Two *pracharaks* arrived from Nagpur in 1937 to open Sangh *Shakhas* in the region viz. Shri K.D. Joshi in Sialkot and Shri Rajbhau Paturkar in Lahore. Both the swayamsevakas commenced their work in the area with dedication and sagacity facing tremendous adversity. Without food, clothes and shelter they continued working and contacting people. Their efforts brought results as the youth in the area started participating in Sangh activities.

Two years later, in 1939, Shri K.D. Joshi contacted a young man Shri Ravinder Verma to open a *Shakha* in Jammu. As per routine, he would come in the morning, meet people and leave in the evening. After a few days, when contacts increased and the impact was quite apparent, it was planned to form a group of Hindu youth to promote a *Shakha* with the cooperation of an active student, Balraj Madhok. Thus commenced regular sessions of meetings of the Hindu youth in Deewan Temple.

In those days, an ITC (Instructor Training Camp) was convened in Sialkot, which is now known as - 'Prathmic Shiksha Varg'. In this camp, Shri Ravinder Verma, with the help of Shri Balraj Madhok sent seven Hindu youngmen for the training, who were picked up as a result of the meetings and inter-active sessions held in Deewan Temple. They later proved as the stepping stones of the Sangh's work in Jammu. This group gave real impetus to the activities and was primarily instrumental for the present status of Sangh's activities in Jammu.

On 15th July, 1940, a function of the ITC *varg* was organized in Sialkot. By that time, Manniye Madhav Rao Ji Mule had joined from Nagpur to streamline and intensify the Sangh's activities in the region. In the said function, he was the main speaker. After the function, a large number of Hindu youth came forward and volunteered themselves to join the Sangh as *Pracharak* and carry

on its activities in the entire region.

As planned and envisaged by Madhav Rao ji Mule, *Tarun Pracharak* (young *swayamsevaks*) were sent to Lahore and Sialkot *Karyalayas*. To mention a few who were sent for the august mission, Shri Ved Prakash Shastri for the frontier area, Shri Lekh Raj Sharma for Multan *Vibhag*, Dr. Harbans Lal for Rawalpindi, Shri Mahavir for Lahore and Shri Jagdish Abrol for Jammu. Highly educated, these young *swayamsevaks*, showing tremendous courage and motivation, toiled tirelessly to undertake the Sangh's work.

Shri Jagdish Abrol belonged to a reputed *Khatri* family of Sialkot. Relinquishing his government service in Posts & Telegraph Department, he joined *Shiksha Varg* in Sialkot and later came to Jammu as *Pracharak*. Brought up and educated in modern environment but cultured with the courageous traits of *Khatri* clan, Shri Abrol had brought with him some money which initially enabled him to sail through.

On reaching Jammu, he spent first night in Brahmin Sabha. This make-shift shelter was used for some time till one-room accommodation was available in Ved Mandir. At this stage, a government employee Shri Bhagat Ram helped Shri Abrol as guardian.

First Shakha First Karyalaya

In one of the rooms of Ved Mandir, where he stayed, Shri Abrol met groups of Hindu youth. In this respect, this could be seen as the first Sangh *karyalaya* (office) of Jammu. The youngmen trained from Sialkot used to come daily to Deewan Mandir to formally commence *shakhas*. Thus began the *Sainyam Shakha* (Evening session). Shri Abrol devoted all his time and effort in expanding and improving the *shakha* activities and attendance. There was a hotelkeeper, Bhola, a good-hearted person at Pucca Dunga, where Shri Abrol used to have his food. Greatly influenced

by Shri Abrol and his group of youth, Bhola came into contact with the Sangh.

For some time, only one shakha was conducted, in which some youngmen were brought up through *Sharirik* (physical training) and *Boudhik* (Educative discourses). As time passed by, second shakha got underway in Rani Temple. Similarly, first *Prabhat shakha* (morning session) started in Deewan Temple itself. Now, in all, three shakhas in Jammu (2 in the evening and 1 in the morning) were in progress.

First Programme

In Nov. 1940, Vijay Dashmi (Dussehra) festival was celebrated in Deewan temple. On this occasion, *Akhil Bharatiya Boudhik Pramukh* Shriman Babu Sahib Apte was the speaker. He was the first *Akhil Bharatiya Adhikari* (official) to attend and grace the occasion at Jammu shakha. In this programme, 150 swayamsevak appeared in *Ganyesh* (uniform). There was impressive presentation of various items—*Danda*, *Yogchap* etc. Some notable public figures and dignitaries of the city were also invited. This function was presided over by Pt. Prem Nath Dogra. After the function, he was given a formal guard of honour by the swayamsevak. Shri Ganga Vishnu from Sialkot was also invited for guidance. Shri Shyam Lal Sharma was made the first *Nagar Karyawah*. Around this time, 2 young swayamsevak from Jammu also participated in OTC camp at Nagpur. Subsequently, public contacts were made at places like Bhadrawah and Mirpur. Another *Prabhat Shakha* (morning session) was launched in Rani temple, which was later known as *Khalki Shakha*. By the end of 1941, four Shakhas each in morning and evening were held in Jammu.

Pujaniya Shri Guruji's First Visit to Jammu

In November, 1941, Sarsanghchalak Param Pujaniya Shri Guruji arrived in Jammu as part of his *Akhil Bharatiya Pravasi* (visit). A grand function was organized in Ved Temple which was

attended by a large number of citizens and swayamsevaks. After this function, main *karyakartas* (Sangh volunteers) met Shri Guruji. Pt. Prem Nath Dogra and Shri Guruji had long discussion about the status of Jammu & Kashmir. Shri Guruji alerted the swayamsevaks about the impending national crisis and exhorted them to perform their duties devotedly towards the nation and Hindu Samaj. After this visit of Guruji, several action plans were formulated like organising shakhas outside Jammu, in areas like Katra, Riyasi, Bhadrawah and Samba. To maintain public contact in these places, Shri Devendra Shastri and Shri Chaman Swarup were sent to Riyasi and Kathua respectively as *Pracharaks*.

The eventuality of the leadership of Hindu Samaj coming into the Sangh's fold scared some opportunist Hindu leaders with vested interests. They opposed the Sangh but could not influence the youth attending the shakhas. A Sangh *Shiksha Varg* was held in 1942 in Khandwa. From this *Varg*, 11 swayamsevaks were sent for training. Shri Jagdish Abrol was sent to Sargodha as *Vibhag Pracharak*. In his place, Shri Balraj Madhok took over as Jammu *Vibhag Pracharak*. But Shri Madhok could work only for 7-8 months as he joined a college in Jammu as a Lecturer in History. Shri Abrol was recalled to the Jammu region. In 1942, a Punjab *Prant* ITC was organised which was attended by 500 swayamsevaks.

In 1945, the swayamsevaks of Jammu undertook the arrangement of grand Shivratri celebrations. It left the Hindu Samaj bewildered to see the rising impact of Sangh and the dedication and conduct of its swayamsevaks. The *Hindu Mahasabha* and the leading lights of Arya Samaj were amazed to see the organisational skills of the Sangh workers.

Grand Tableaus of Janamashtami Parva

Influenced by the successful conduct of '*Shivaratni Mahaparva*', the Hindu leaders of Jammu met Shri Jagdish Abrol in Ved Temple. They requested him for providing security cover to

the tableaux of Bhagwan Shri Krishna in the Janamashtami procession. These tableaux, normally, could not be taken beyond *Kanak Mandi* (grain market). In this regard, Shri Abrol stipulated 3 conditions. First, they should arrange for the legal expenses, in advance, to safeguard the swayamsevaks. Second, the swayamsevaks, with arms, will accompany in plain clothes. Third, in case of any trouble, no leader will be allowed to escape. After detailed discussion, Shri Abrol took upon himself and Sangh, the entire responsibility of safety and security of the tableaux, Hindu leaders, saints, women etc. taking part in the Janamashtami celebrations.

At that time, about 2,000 swayamsevaks attended the shakhas of Jammu city daily. They were instructed to keep an alert vigil during the procession of *Janamashtami*. When the procession was taken out, fifty armed swayamsevaks in plain clothes were pulling the chariot of Lord Shri Krishna. Fifty swayamsevaks were given the task of security of Hindu leaders and saints. 200 swayamsevaks were lined up surrounding the women. Another 100 of them took position with arms atop the buildings in *Kanak Mandi* and Rajendra Bazar, in plain clothes. The strong security cover provided by the swayamsevaks ensured that the procession of Shri Krishna marched with honour, gaiety and dignity. Wherever there was a hint of trouble or mischief, it was put down with heavy hands. This new-found awakening among Hindus and their organizational skill was appreciated by one and all.

In 1946 again, the trouble-makers challenged the Janamashtami festivities. The swayamsevaks accepted the challenge and vowed to sacrifice their life for the sake of their sacred duty. The Sangh had obviously become stronger. Swayamsevaks were positioned all along the route of the procession. The possible trouble spots were meticulously guarded. Trouble erupted but it was dealt with firmness. The pride of Hindu Samaj had again won.

By 1946, partition of the country had become inevitable. The likely trouble arising out of the partition could be clearly anticipated. The swayamsevaks were motivated to come forward and perform the duty of protecting Hindu Samaj till the last drop of their blood. The anti-national activities of the Pakistan-supported elements increased. On the other hand, there was also increase in the number of the Sangh shakhas.

Besides Jammu, more than 60 places in the entire region were now holding shakhas, attended by thousands of Hindu youth. In Kashmir, through the efforts of Shri Balraj Madhok, Sangh had initiated its plans in Srinagar, Anantnag and Baramullah. At the time of partition the Sangh had become a formidable organization of Hindu Samaj.

It was by virtue of the strength of swayamsevaks that the Sangh could protect the Hindus, provide relief to displaced brethren from Pakistan and frustrate the anti-nationals. Before Indo-Pak conflict erupted, the swayamsevaks gathered crucial inputs about the looming threats and dangers and held the enemy in their tracks till the arrival of Indian army. They assisted the military in their operations and did their best to ensure accession of Jammu & Kashmir to India.



Accession of Jammu & Kashmir to India

The Ministers and advisers of Maharaja of Kashmir tried their best, in national interest, to ensure merger of Jammu & Kashmir into India. Great leaders and patriots like Acharya J.B. Kriplani, Sardar Patel and Mahatma Gandhi made all-out efforts for accession to India but the Maharaja of Kashmir did not agree. He did not want to function under Pt. Nehru. On the other hand, the Pakistan's army had reached the Kashmir border.

Accession and Sangh

With our leaders having failed in their efforts to persuade Maharaja of Kashmir for accession to India and the situation aggravating fast, Sardar Patel personally made special appeal to the RSS Sarsanghchalak, Shri Madhavrao Sadashiv Golwalkar (Shri Guruji), through Shri Mehar Chand Mahajan, to use his influence and seek Maharaja's consent for accession. Realizing the gravity of the situation and urgency to find out the solution, Shri Guruji rose to the occasion and cancelling all his engagements immediately took a flight from Nagpur to reach Srinagar via Delhi. Pt. Prem Nath Dogra and Mehar Chand Mahajan coordinated the meeting of Shri Guruji with Maharaja Hari Singh.

This was not a personal meeting nor was it a discussion over property, land or vote politics. It was a historic meeting concerning unity and sovereignty of the nation. The Maharaja, whom the various national leaders failed to convince about the accession of his State to India bowed his head in respect before Shri Guruji who had an aura of a *Tapasvi*. Appreciating the significance and value of *dharma* and the nation, Maharaja agreed for accession and sent his proposal in this respect to India. Before leaving, Shri Guruji made a fervent appeal to the swayamsevaks to work sincerely and perform their national duty with dedication in this hour of national crisis.

It may be recalled that in July, 1947, *Prant Sanghchalak* of Panjab Shri Rai Bahadur Badri Das too met Maharaja Hari Singh and tried to convince him about accession to India but in vain.

Shri Madhav Rao Mule, *Prant Pracharak* of Punjab and Jammu & Kashmir, who later became Sangh *Sarkaryawah*, has mentioned about this historical fact in "Shri Guruji - Samagra Darshan" (Part-I : Pp 172) in his memoirs, "The Union Home Minister, Sardar Patel advised Shri Mehar Chand Mahajan, Diwan of Jammu & Kashmir to convince Maharaja Hari Singh about the accession of the state to India. Shri Mehar Chand sent a message to Shri Guruji requesting him to meet the Maharaja and convince him to agree to the accession of Kashmir. It was Shri Mahajan who had arranged the meeting between Pujaniya Shri Guruji and Maharaja".

The accession of Jammu & Kashmir to India was, undoubtedly, a crucial and historical event which took place in Indian history but it has not been reported or highlighted in any book of substance, primarily due to three factors –

First, the people associated with Sangh are trained and ingrained with one sole value- 'service to the nation.' They are not bothered about publicity and naturally, do not show off for the same. Hon. Shri Guruji shunned self-glorifying hype and never wished to be

written about in print media or any other chronicle. That is why one finds little printed material about the patriotic activities of swayamsevak. Educated and groomed in the culture of *Prasidhiprangmukhta*, Sangh karyakartas are groomed to behave in a self-effacing and unassuming manner. Unlike leaders in politics or other fields, Shri Guruji, unassumingly, never wanted any account or biography for himself.

Secondly, impact of publicity-hungry Congress top leadership's mindset on History writers, is too obvious. After attainment of independence, whatever books have been written about the freedom struggle, have been entirely influenced by the congress leadership. The non-congress contributors to the freedom movement have, unfortunately, not been given due coverage. To mention a few leading personalities who made tremendous contribution to the national cause – Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, Veer Sawarkar, Bhagat Singh and Dr. Hedgewar. They played a significant role in the efforts to achieve Independence, but due to this prejudiced and biased mental attitude their contributions have not been appropriately highlighted. Similarly, Shri Guruji who played such a pivotal role in persuading the Maharaja of Jammu & Kashmir for accession, finds little mention. The congress leadership who came to power after independence had an inherent lust for publicity, praise and hype and, therefore, hankered after it. Not only that, they always tried to negate and undermine the role, participation and sacrifice of non-congress freedom fighters, obviously for narrow minded political motives.

Thirdly, immediately after accession of Jammu & Kashmir to India, Sheikh Abdullah became Prime Minister of the State. To take all the credit for accession, he told innumerable lies, changed many stances and destroyed all the significant documents and files. It is suspected that he even destroyed many documents and written memoirs of Mahahraj Hari Singh.

Facts and Documents as witness

The deliberations between Shri Guruji and Maharaja Hari Singh resulted into accession of Jammu & Kashmir to India. This historical fact of monumental significance has not been duly addressed in any form of written history. Whatever substantiates the above event is in the form of notes and letters written and recorded by the people who were present on the occasion - Sangh *Pracharaks* or conveners of the historical meeting. Besides, some notable writers have described that event in their articles and books. Needless to say, the history is woven on the fabric of the memoirs of certain key witnesses.

Captain Diwan Singh, ADC of Maharaja Hari Singh has stated in his letter that he had seen Shri Guruji entering the 'Karan Mahal' (The Royal Residence) for the meeting. It was a lengthy meeting between Maharaja and Shri Guruji. The statement of Capt. Diwan Singh is recorded in the book - "*Shri Guruji aur Jammu-Kashmir*" published by *Shri Guruji Janam Shatabadi Samaroh Samiti* and edited and compiled by Dr. Maharaj Krishan Bharat.

Similarly, memoirs of a senior Sangh functionary late B.N. Vanharpande, were highlighted in an article published in Jammu based monthly, 'Tavi Dipika' in October, 1988. He was also present at the time of the meeting. The article even mentioned about the stay arrangement of Shri Guruji, time and venue of the historic meet. Besides, reference of this event has been made in the following books, periodicals and documents -

1. Ex-Sarkaryawah, H. V. Seshadari's book "RSS - A Vision in Action" (P. 25-27) published by Jagran Prakashan, Bangalore.
2. An article- "RSS-Role in Accession of Kashmir to India" written by R.C. Batura published in Delhi-based weekly "Organizer" (Vol. XLIV). Accordingly, on 26 October, 1947, six days after the meeting between Maharaja Hari Singh and Shri Guruji, RSS Sarsanghchalak, the Maharaja signed the document of 'Accession' of Jammu & Kashmir into India'.

3. Similarly, an Article – “The Accession of the JK State and Maharaja Hari Singh” by Dr.D.C.Sharma printed in a book “Maharaja Hari Singh” (Pp 135-136) edited by Prof. M.L.Kapur, Ex-Head of Department of History in Jammu University and published by Har-Anand Publications, Delhi reveals that the arguments of Shri Golwalkar, RSS Sarsanghchalak for accession of the state of JK convinced the Maharaja and he finally decided to give his consent to accession.
4. In the book titled, “Partition Days – The Fiery Saga of RSS”, the Author, Manik Chandra Bajpayee writes in a chapter ‘Accession of Kashmir : Sangh’s Efforts’ (Pp. 256-260) thus, ‘Shri Golwalkar (Guruji) performed a duty to the nation by convincing and making the Maharaja of Jammu & Kashmir agree to the accession of the state’.

Shri Madhav Rao Mule, the *Prant Pracharak* writes about this historical event in his memoirs contained in “Shri Guruji – Samagra Darshan”. Shri Mule was one of the main conveners of the meeting that took place between Shri Guruji and Maharaja. The other conveners were – Shri Balraj Madhok, Shri Harish Bhanot, Shri Vasant Rao Oak, Shri Jagdish Abrol and Shri Abba Sahib Thatte.

All the above references given in the books, memoirs and articles are appended in this book ad verbatim. These references testify, beyond an iota of doubt, the sequential occurrence of events which culminated in the ‘accession’, beginning with the initiative taken by the Home Minister of India, Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel to requesting Shri Guruji to play his role in this significant and crucial matter and convince Maharaja about the accession. Thus the role played by Shri Guruji in this great event deserves an august place in the history of our nation.

Shri Guruji – Maharaja Meeting

Those were early days of October, 1947. Maharaja Hari Singh was the Head of State of Kashmir. The accession of various states

to India or Pakistan, after partition of the country was left to the choice of various Kings and Heads of States. About Jammu & Kashmir's accession to India or Pakistan, Maharaja Hari Singh was in an indecisive and confused state of mind. This was primarily due to the fact that he was not agreeable to the condition put forth by Pt. Nehru that Sheikh Abdullah may be released and made Chief Administrator of Kashmir state.

In the midst of Maharaja's indecision and confusion, Pakistan leaders hatched a treacherous plan. Accordingly, under the guidance and supervision of Pakistan's military, a large number of Pakistani soldiers in plain clothes would sneak into Kashmir via Rawalpindi and other routes, indulge in arson, violence, riots, looting, creating large scale disturbances, instigate Muslim soldiers to revolt and take control of the airports including Srinagar. In the final part of their plan, in the third week of October, on the occasion of Eid, they intended to hoist the Pakistani flag in Srinagar and perform '*Namaaz*' in Shahi Masjid and then declare to the world that it was Kashmiri people's revolution against the Maharaja of Kashmir.

Soon, the activities got underway as per the plan. The Pakistani soldiers, in plain clothes, intruded into Kashmir equipped with arms. Pakistan imposed strict ban on the export of such essential items like petrol, kerosene etc. which were supplied to Kashmir via Rawalpindi. It put the life of the Kashmiri people into disarray.

The RSS swayamsevaks who had substantial presence in Jammu region were quite vigilant. Collecting vital inputs about alleged intrusion of Pakistani soldiers and their wicked plans and keeping a watchful eye on their movements, swayamsevaks passed on the crucial information to Diwan Mehar Chand Mahajan and Maharaja Hari Singh. Sardar Patel wanted Kashmir to remain an inseparable part of India. But he was quite concerned about Pt. Nehru's response and policy towards Shiekh Abdullah. He was fully aware of the hostile and aggressive activities carried out by

Pakistan in Kashmir and was quite perturbed about it.

Disturbed and worried, Sardar Patel got an idea. He was fully confident that Shri Golwalkar was the person who could help in this critical hour by persuading Maharaja Hari Singh for accession. If the Maharaja, by accepting an odd condition of Pt. Nehru, agrees for accession of Kashmir, he, then, as Home Minister could handle the situation well. With a firm belief that Shri Guruji can successfully convince the Maharaja, he proceeded very cautiously to carry out his plan. Sardar Patel informed Shri Mehar Chand Mahajan to invite Shri Guruji to Srinagar and arrange his meeting with Maharaja Hari Singh. In those days, there was no regular service from Delhi to Srinagar and Jammu - Srinagar passage was also not safe. Therefore, special arrangement for Shri Guruji's air travel to Srinagar was made. Further, Sardar Patel also made it clear that in view of the emerging scenario there was extreme urgency to arrange this meeting between the two.

As planned, Shri Guruji reached Srinagar by a special plane on 17th October, 1947 on the invitation of Shri Mehar Chand Mahajan. In the meeting that took place between the two, Shri Mehar Chand Mahajan was also present.

After informal talk, the issue of accession came up. The Maharaja said, "All the roads and passages to Kashmir are through Rawalpindi. The communication links like telephone, telegram etc. are based in Pakistan and essential provisions like food grains, salt, petrol, kerosene etc. are supplied by Pakistan. Jammu-Srinagar road link is neither good nor safe. Even Jammu airport is not upto the mark. Under these conditions, accession of the state to India will induce Pakistan enforce immediate ban on the export of essential commodities to Kashmir. This will put the people of Kashmir in severe hardship. In view of all these factors, it would be proper and advisable, even though temporarily, to retain the independent status of Kashmir." Shri Guruji said, "I appreciate the deep sense

of care and concern that you have for your people. But even if you want to keep Kashmir as an independent state it would not be acceptable to Pakistan at all. They are trying their best to cause rebellion in your armed forces and the masses. There are confirmed reports that in the event of an armed conflict, the Muslim soldiers in your forces will revolt against you and join hands with Pakistan army. It is also learnt that Pakistan is planning to cut supplies to Kashmir in the next 6-7 days. Soon after declaring Pakistan as an independent state Pakistan army will then move into Kashmir from Rawalpindi side. If it happens, you can well imagine the plight of your people who will be at the mercy of Pakistani armed forces. After declaring Kashmir as an independent state even Indian army will not be in a position to come to your rescue and safety. In these trying circumstances, the only appropriate option for you would be - immediate accession of Kashmir to India."

Maharaja Hari Singh replied, "Pt. Nehru insists that before accession of the state, Sheikh Abdullah may be released and administration of Kashmir be handed over to him. Even after Kashmir's accession to India, if Sheikh Abdullah is made the Chief Administrator of the state, the condition of the people will not be less pitiable and there will be no control on the anti-India activities. Shri Guruji, expressing his view, said, "Your apprehension is justified. Sardar Patel is fully aware of Sheikh Abdullah's activities. As Home Minister he will certainly have a sense of concern for your people. Please repose full faith in Sardar Patel. He will never brook any misdemeanor of Sheikh Abdullah which is against the national interest."

Maharaja asked, "If Pakistan imposes ban on the export of various commodities to the state, will India be able to supply them in time for the people of Kashmir? Sringar-Jammu link is not in proper condition. The Pakistan army is camping near Jammu. The Jammu airport is still not operational. As such, how can India

provide essential commodities like foodgrains, salt, petrol, kerosene etc. for our people urgently?"

Shri Guruji replied, "Sardar Patel has already given due thought to these issues. Immediately after obtaining your willingness for the accession, all necessary arrangements will be made by the Indian government to ensure supply of essential items for the people. Civil works for making Jammu airport operational and efforts for safety of the people will be soon initiated and completed. There are hundreds of swayamsevak in Jammu to offer assistance. With the cooperation of the administration, every activity will be done with a sense of urgency. Swayamsevak will make whole-hearted contribution to ensure completion of various works. I give you my assurance in this regard."

Maharaja - "Your swayamsevak have indeed provided us vital information from time to time. Though, initially we did not believe their information, but later we found them to be absolutely authentic. The courage displayed by them in collecting some sensitive information about the movement of Pakistani army is praiseworthy. If Sardar Patel is personally concerned about Sheikh Abdullah's activities, we are agreeable for accession to India."

Then, Shri Mehar Chand Mahajan, reaffirming what Shri Guruji had said, requested Maharaja to prepare for Kashmir's accession to India, in the interest of Kashmir.

Shri Guruji said, "Immediately after receiving your willingness for accession, Sardar Patel will initiate all the necessary formalities on the union government's part."

Maharaja - "I fully agree with you. You can now inform Sardar Patel about it."

Shri Guruji - "You should also take care of your security, though our swayamsevak are quite alert in this regard. They are genuinely concerned about the whole situation and will keep you apprised of

any threat to your security. Now you can proceed to Jammu where you will be in safer environment."

Maharaja - "You have given us an appropriate opinion in the interest of Kashmir, otherwise, we would have faced unimaginable hardships. We are really thankful to you."

Shri Guruji - "As a swayamsevak, it is my duty to advise you correctly about the whole scenario to ensure well being of Kashmiri people."

Maharaja - "Please accept this small gift, shawl made of wool (toos), as token of love, from our side"

Shri Guruji reached Delhi on October 19, 1947 and apprised Sardar Patel of his talks with Maharaja Hari Singh. To complete various formalities for the process of 'accession' Home Secretary Shri Menon rushed to Srinagar. After formal talks with Maharaja, his consent for accession was obtained. The Indian army reached Srinagar by air on 27 October 1947, but before that the Maharaja had to leave Srinagar for Jammu.

On October 27, when the Indian army landed in Srinagar the Pakistani army, by then, had reached Baramullah. One unit of Pakistan armed forces had left for taking control of Srinagar airport. As the news of the Indian army reaching Srinagar airport spread, it compelled the Pakistani army to retreat from Baramullah. Thus, Kashmir and Srinagar were saved. It is well known that the area of 'Azad Kashmir' remained under Pakistan's occupation due to declaration of 'cease fire.'



The Sangh in Kashmir Valley

Balraj Madhok, after working for about 8 months as Sangh *Pracharak*, joined D.A.V. College, Srinagar as Lecturer in History in August, 1944. He continued working for Sangh along with his career of teaching. He decided to involve himself actively in the activities of Sangh even while working as lecturer; this decision, in a way, brought him to Srinagar.

The Kashmiri Hindus had learnt a lesson from the dangerous developments arising out of the communal riots of 1930-31. The anti-Hindu and anti-national designs of Sheikh Abdullah had, by now, become quite obvious. He kept employing dubious means for getting the support of Muslims, the dominant community in the valley, to fulfil his sinister objectives. The demand for partition of the country was becoming louder with each passing day. In this hour of crisis, the Hindu Samaj was desperately looking for a support. Therefore, they were fully convinced that only an All India Hindu organisation like RSS could provide them the necessary support and guarantee their safety and security.

Sheikh Abdullah changed his party's name from Muslim Conference to National Conference. He succeeded in obtaining the support of the Congress Party and Indian press. The Maharaja

too gave him total freedom in making public speeches. At that time, the leading congressmen in the country were in jails. The state of Jammu & Kashmir was exempted from mass arrests and it benefitted Sheikh Abdullah.

The Kashmiri Hindus could see through the sensitive development and new plan of Sheikh Abdullah. Therefore, with the efforts of Balraj Madhok, first Sangh *shakha* was inaugurated in the year 1944. But this *shakha* was mainly attended by the swayamsevaks of Jammu and Punjab. Kashmiri swayamsevaks were also attracted to the *shakhas* in due course of time as a result of the sincere efforts made by the Jammu and Punjab swayamsevaks. It was usually believed, at that time, that Kashmiri people- Hindus or Muslims do not mingle with the non-Kashmiris. But the culture of shakhas and manner of their conduct as propounded by Pujaniya Dr. Hedgewar has this unique attribute in its working style that the differences of province, language, creed etc. are ironed out in no time.

Though initially, the *Shakha* in Srinagar was mainly attended by the swayamsevaks of Jammu and Punjab but with the Kashmiri youth too joining the *shakhas* their barriers of regionalism vanished. The attitude of aloofness which was stuffed into their minds by various narrow considerations disappeared fast due to the cultural inputs imbibed in the *shakhas*. As per Shri Balraj Madhok, "For 2 years, I worked tirelessly in Kashmir to expand Sangh's activities. In the beginning, I visited personally every Kashmiri Hindu's house in the farthest streets of the old Srinagar. First, the network of shakhas was spread in Srinagar followed by other cities in the valley. We had an excellent team of dedicated workers among the Kashmiri youth who helped me in performing my duties. During those days. I stayed on the first floor of a small house near a playground in Hazoori Bagh with the Sangh karyalaya located just beneath." By mid - 1946, the number of swayamsevaks reached

1,000. When they assembled in 'Ganvesh' on Sunday, they inspired not only self - confidence and enthusiasm but even the ordinary Hindus (non-swayamsevak) could not escape the spell-binding impact of their presence.

Sangh had become a force to reckon with in Kashmir. But its impact was more visible among the young generation. Kashmiri Hindus of older generation were still attached to their age-old beliefs and perceptions. Their leaders, those days, were Shri Shivrinarayan Fotedar, Janardan Teng etc. who were in constant touch with me as we met quite often. They regarded Sangh as a reliable organisation like a 'friend in adversity' and, thus, had developed due respect for it. But despite that, they, at best, could be taken as 'friends by convenience'. They were, in fact, crafty by nature and could easily shift their preferences. They lacked strength of character and displayed loyalty to Maharaja and also Sheikh Abdullah at the same time. Showing opportunism, they placed their conviction in both Pt. Nehru because of his being a Kashmiri Hindu and Sheikh Abdullah for the fact that he was in a position who could at any time hold reins of power. They, somehow, were not the people having a broader view of things and hence lacked a national perspective in their thinking. But they were amazed at the way Sangh was gaining esteem, becoming popular and the impact of its culture and conduct on the younger generation. This new generation was the ray of hope and a potent force of nationalism in the changing milieu of Kashmir.

Param Pujaniya Sarsanghchalak in Kashmir

By mid 1946, the Sangh *shakhas* had blossomed in the Kashmir valley in as much as the educated young men got in touch with the Sangh and its activities. The number of Kashmiri youth coming to shakhas was increasing. During Shri Guruji's '*Pravas*' in North India, a huge public meeting was also scheduled to be held in Srinagar. All the swayamsevak and workers were elated

when they learnt about it. It was a natural response as Kashmir was a Muslim dominated region with 90% of the populace being Muslim and also, the Hindu samaj had little say in the over-all Kashmir affairs for centuries. The sanctity of their religious faith was in peril as people virtually had no designated place of faith and worship. Under such conditions, visit of the Head of a powerful Hindu organization was no small matter. The function was held in the premises of D.A.V. College, Srinagar. Over 1,000 swayamsevaks appeared in 'Ganvesh'. The main public figures and dignitaries of the city were also invited. Impressing upon the need for unity of Hindu Samaj, Shri Guruji cautioned the people to stay alert and awake in view of the subversive activities of the anti-national forces. He exhorted the people to unite and thwart their designs. This function sent a wave of refreshing vigour in the Kashmir valley which was reminiscent of the atmosphere prevailing at the time of Pakistani aggression.

The '*Pravas*' of Param Pujaniya Sarsanghchalak in Kashmir was enormously significant from the viewpoint of Sangh shakhas. Many young swayamsevaks like Shri Makhan Lal Emma and Onkar Nath Kak became '*Pracharak*' and various notable persons of the region came into contact with the Sangh. The OTC (Training Camp) of Punjab Prant was organized at Phagwara near Jalandhar in June, 1947, which was attended by more than 2,000 young swayamsevaks of Punjab, Jammu & Kashmir and border areas. While attending Phagwara training camp in the hot weather and rising socio-political tension, these youngmen displayed the magical impact of Shri Guruji's personality and style of functioning at the shakhas, otherwise Kashmiris were not used to the habit of staying out for one month at their own expense!



Sangh on the War Front

At the time of partition, the superb sacrifice made by the young swayamsevaks of the Sangh to save Kashmir deserves a special place in the Indian history. From the morning of 15th August 1947, the Pakistani miscreants started their activities in Srinagar. Green flags of Pakistan were unfurled atop the government buildings. The patriotic swayamsevaks accepted this challenge. Immediately, plans were formulated in the Sangh *Karyalaya*. By 10:00 A.M. thousands of swayamsevaks and Hindus, agog with national fervour, assembled near America bridge. Even those who called Kashmiri Pandits timid and faint-hearted were amazed to see the charged-up emotions of the people. In no time, Pakistani green flags were removed from the buildings. A large procession was taken out on the main roads of the city, lustily challenging Pakistan. The shouts of "Bharat Mata ki Jai" reverberated in the atmosphere. The Hindu samaj got a new surge of courage and it also conveyed to Maharaja how patriotic and resolute were the swayamsevaks of Sangh.

Two *Pracharaks* of Sangh, Harish Bhanot and Mangal Sen established contact with Pakistani officers and in the garb of Muslims obtained vital information about their activities and aggressive plans. This information was passed on to Sangh

Pramukh Shri Balraj Madhok. Even the timing and route of the impending attack by the Pakistani army was informed. After receiving the information, Maharaja invited Balraj Madhok to his royal palace and asked him to present 200 swayamsevak before him.

At 2.00 A.M. the swayamsevak were advised to assemble at 6.00 A.M. in Arya Samaj Temple. By 6.00 A.M., 200 swayamsevak reached the temple. All were young college students prepared to lay down their lives for the nation. The proceedings began with patriotic song, followed by Sangh's prayer. After that, military trucks arrived and took these swayamsevak to Badamibagh cantonment where they were provided training in the use of arms. By evening they were posted on the war-front for two days. Till the regular Indian army arrived, these swayamsevak kept the Pakistani soldiers at bay. Indeed, the heroic deeds of these swayamsevak have remained unsung. Sheikh Abdullah was well aware of the Sangh's prowess. He was the one, who, in anticipation of the Pakistani armed attack on Srinagar, rushed to Mumbai alongwith his family, leaving the Kashmiri people to their fate. Kashmir was saved by the swayamsevak in the first place and then by the Indian army and not by the gutless Sheikh Abdullah who fled for his safety.

Immortal Martyrs of Kotli

As the preparations for the exchange of fire were on, some boxes of ammunition were erroneously dropped by our Air Force in the area which was in the firing range of Pakistan army. Now the problem arose how to bring them back. Sending soldiers for this task meant going into the open jaws of death. It was not considered tactically appropriate because army men were required to fight the enemy on the front. If the boxes were not picked up, the unarmed soldiers would be like sitting ducks for the enemy.

It required daring heart and courage to bring back those boxes. The army commander, assessing that only swayamsevak could

accomplish this audacious task, approached Sangh karyalaya of Kotli. At that time, Shri Chandra Prakash, Manager of Punjab National Bank was Nagar karyawah of Kotli *shakha*. He carefully listened to the commander and asked, "How many jawans you want?"

The commander replied, "Eight are enough". Chandra Prakash, full of patriotic zeal, said, "I am one and will bring 7 more in half an hour. Please wait and relax."

Saying this, Chandra Prakash went out to arrange for swayamsevaks for the task. More than 30 swayamsevaks came forward for the duty of sacrifice. Now the problem of selecting only 7 swayamsevaks came up. At last 8 were short listed who were given calm and tearful send-off by their companions. It was difficult to convince the remaining swayamsevaks as they were so overwhelmed by the spirit of sacrifice for the nation.

Chandra Prakash, alongwith 7 swayamsevaks met the waiting commander. All of them were briefed about the task. Soon the operation started. It was full of grave risk, reaching the ammunition boxes in the firing line of the Pakistan forces, picking and bringing them back to the Indian post. Crawling and creeping, the 8 jawans reached the 'nullah' which separated them from the containers lying on the other side. They swam across the nullah and reached the boxes. They picked up the boxes and carrying them on their backs swam back. As they were returning, their movement in the water created some noise which was audible enough for the Pakistani soldiers to react. There was heavy gun fire from their side. Our jawans did not panic. They had only one mission i.e. bringing the boxes to the Indian army post. In the midst of heavy fire, the jawans crossed *nullah* and proceeded to the army camp.

The firing intensified. Chandra Prakash and Ved Prakash, the two jawans were hit by bullets and fell down. As there was little time to attend to them, the remaining six jawans kept creeping with boxes on their backs. Handing over the boxes to the army

commander they had carried out the mission successfully. Now they were perturbed about their two friends who were left behind injured. All the six then left for picking the two jawans in the midst of heavy gun fire. It was indeed a superb example of heroism, duty to the nation and undying love for their colleagues.

Now the gun fire became thick and fast. They reached the spot where their two friends had got injured. To their shock, what they found were their mortal remains. The martyrdom had been achieved by the two patriotic souls in the service of the nation. There was no time for mourning. They picked up the bodies and carrying them on their backs proceeded through the bushes, to the army camp. There was no respite from the spraying bullets. Another tragedy was in store for them. They had just moved ahead when one of them got hit by 2 bullets in the ear, which proved fatal. His body was also picked up and again they started inching forward. In the midst of heavy firing, carrying the bodies of 3 colleagues they were moving towards the camp when one more *jawan* was hit by the enemy. One more bullet and one more sacrifice. Hardened by what was happening, the rest of the swayamsevak pushed on resolutely.

The youngmen finally reached the camp. It was heart-rending scene. Out of eight who had left for the mission, only four returned. Each one carried a martyr on his back. The people of Kotli, swayamsevak, mothers and sisters had spent the entire day waiting in tears. The slogans of '*Bharat Mata ki Jai*', '*Shahidon ki Jai*' ranted the air. The bodies of the martyrs were bedecked with flowers. The funeral pyres were prepared. The military commanders saluted them, the swayamsevak greeted them with '*Pranam*' and the women folk showered flowers. Finally, the martyrs were given the tearful farewell.

The army jawans opened the boxes of ammunition, took out the weapons and pounced on the Pakistani positions with heavy fire. The heavy exchange of fire continued throughout the night. As the sun broke out the next day, our army jawans had taken control

of the hill dislodging the Pakistani army. There was rejoicing among the army jawans and the people to see Indian Tricolor unfurling atop the hill.

Air Strips made operational

As there were no facilities for air-dropping the Indian army jawans in Jammu & Kashmir, there was urgent need for setting up the same. But the installation of such facilities in a very short time was a huge task. As arrangement of labour on a large scale was the main problem, the massive task required people with superb determination and strength who could work, with zeal and application, continuously, without caring for food or water. Again, the army commanders and civil authorities thought that only the Sangh swayamsevaks could accomplish the difficult task.

They held discussion with functionaries of the Sangh. As the message spread, thousands of swayamsevaks, in no time, came forward to offer their services. At three places-Srinagar, Poonch and Jammu, the construction of the airstrips got underway. The groups of swayamsevaks worked round the clock. They would move out in knickers, carrying their own home-made food. Even the implements required for levelling, digging, etc. were arranged by Sangh karyalaya. After hours of hard labour, when the groups of swayamsevaks sat together to relax and share their food, the whole atmosphere was beaming with a spirit of love, service and mutual cooperation.

The swayamsevaks worked hard continuously for days and nights, took leave from their respective jobs, left their homes, vocations and families thus characterising the principle "Everything for the nation, nothing for self". The mission was achieved within the prescribed time schedule. All the airstrips were ready for operational use.

Dauntless Courage in the midst of gunfire

In the meantime, a news came that in Palandhari, 20 km. away from Kotli, the enemy has surrounded about 1200 Hindus and

Sikhs who are in grave danger. The swayamsevaks of Kotli *shakha*, led by Sangh *Pracharak* Kedar Nath Sahni met senior army officers, apprised them of the serious situation and requested them to initiate action for the safety of the trapped people. The army officers appreciated the sensitivity of the issue but expressed their inability to do anything due to the paucity of the soldiers as the jawans available for the security of the city itself were in inadequate strength. When they were told that hundreds of Hindus and Sikhs will lose their life if timely action was not taken, the army officers realized the gravity of the situation. A force of 31 soldiers, led by Lt. Ishwar Singh was put on duty for the rescue of Hindus. A police Inspector Hari Singh also accompanied them alongwith a group of 100 swayamsevaks.

The news of the planned rescue operation to be undertaken by the army and the swayamsevaks jointly was leaked by a Muslim Tehsildar to the Lumberdar (Land officer) and Jaildar of Sarsave. Both of them were Muslims. As they passed on this information to the tribals, next day, when the group of army men and swayamsevaks moved out to Palandhari for the rescue and started climbing the hill, a heavy hail of bullets greeted them. The enemy had taken position on the higher places, equipped with machine guns, mortar, bombs etc.

In the heavy exchange of fire that continued for hours, Indian army jawans and swayamsevaks, though outnumbered both in terms of men and equipment, fought valiantly, without conceding the ground. Inflicting heavy casualty and losses in the enemy ranks, they, one by one, fought their last battle of life. Even today, the blood- red soil of Palandhari is reminiscent of the sacrifice by the valiant jawans of Indian army and courageous swayamsevaks.

Long live the great martyrs !!



The Rise of Sheikh Abdullah

The Britishers, to achieve their political and diplomatic objective and sustain their rule over India, followed two basic principles. First, “divide and rule” and second, ‘to create capable and pliable agents to serve their first principle’.

The Kings and Heads of the Indian states played their part in serving the second political objective of the Britishers. They, instead of forming a united front to fight the Britishers, chose the convenient path. Complacent with their own individual state, people and authority, they never showed signs of unity and willpower to fight and prevent the foreign rule from taking roots in India, except the freedom struggle of 1857. The Britishers had not, by then, consolidated their position in India. Extremely crafty and deceitful, they also kept nurturing the vanity of the indigenous rulers and never tried to disturb their comfort zones. It was their well-designed move to seek the support of the Indian Kings. Rather, through the strategic and diplomatic ties with the Indian rulers, the Britishers succeeded in maintaining their stronghold over India for so long.

A Patriotic Maharaja

In 1931, when Maharaja Hari Singh, as Chairman of Chamber of Princes (Narendra Mandal) raised the issue of India's

independence in the Round Table Conference held in London, the British government was shocked. The raising of the issue by the Head of the Union of Indian States meant, from a political standpoint, throwing a challenge to the Britishers. On the other hand, the activities connected with the freedom movement and partition of India were on the increase too. Muslim League with full support of Lord Mountbatten was pressing for its demand of a separate nation- Pakistan, for serving its political motives.

Kashmir was a Muslim-majority state and when the Maharaja raised the issue of complete freedom, it dealt a severe blow to the very base of the Britishers' communal politics.

Incensed and bewildered by the challenging posture of Maharaja, Mountbatten got alerted making him look for a suitable British agent for Kashmir. The Britishers now wanted a new strategic plan in place, i.e. making the Maharaja unpopular in the state, shaking his political base and finally decimating him by wooing the Muslims and instigating them to rise against him. To achieve their objective, they required the support of a new Muslim leader. A young emerging Muslim leader Sheikh Abdullah caught the attention of Mountbatten for this purpose.

Fanatic Sheikh Abdullah

Sheikh Abdullah was product of the Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) which had produced Muslim leaders who advocated and propagated separatist theory among the Muslim community. The top Muslim leaders who subscribed and supported the theories of Muslim nationalism, Muslim communalism and 'creation of Pakistan' were the leading lights of this university. Sheikh Abdullah came to Kashmir after obtaining his M.Sc. Degree from AMU in 1930 and joined Govt. High School, Srinagar as Science teacher. It was here that he started his political activities. In order to form and consolidate his base in Kashmir, he decided to organize the Muslims and especially the youth against the Maharaja. He even

left his government service and took to anti- Maharaja activities on a full-time basis.

With open involvement in communal activities, Sheikh initiated a movement for increased participation of Muslims in government jobs, administration and their religious freedom. Resorting to inflammatory speeches from the mosques, he kept spreading the venom of communalism in the entire atmosphere. He succeeded in painting the movement in Islamic tinge. Gopi Nath Srivastava writes about this movement in his book, 'Kashmir' - "A Muslim cook, named Abdul Qadir came to Kashmir along with a European visitor. He joined this movement too and delivered a seditiously inflammatory speech in a meeting held in Shah Hamdan on June 21, 1931. He was arrested and put on trial. When his case was being heard in central jail in Srinagar, a crowd of about 5,000 people gathered outside the jail, broke open the gate and cut power supply to the jail which enraged the prisoners even. They demanded withdrawal of charges against Qadir. Soon the crowd turned violent and in the police firing that followed to control the situation, 21 people were killed. A procession was taken out with the dead bodies which aggravated the communal tension in the city. The shops of Hindus were looted and 3 Hindus murdered. The harmonious relations between the two communities had now turned bitter. The Maharaja appointed a committee under the chairmanship of the Chief Justice to conduct an inquiry into the police firing. The Muslims boycotted the committee of Inquiry." In such tension filled atmosphere, Sheikh Abdullah emerged as a local leader of the Muslims.

Riots led by Sheikh Abdullah on the Maharaja's Birthday

It was Maharaja's birthday on September 24, 1932. The entire city of Srinagar was decorated to celebrate the festive occasion in which Muslims too wanted to participate. This did not go well with

Sheikh. The joyous participation of Muslims in the festivities of Maharaja's birthday was a severe blow to the divisive and vicious politics of Sheikh Abdullah. He, therefore decided to create disturbance in the celebration to vitiate the fun-filled atmosphere. As per his wicked plan, 2 days prior to the birthday, when celebratory procession was taken out, stones were pelted. What was apprehended happened. The entire city was engulfed in communal flames. This communal strife was the handiwork of the members of 'Muslim Reading Room', a party formed by Sheikh Abdullah, to spread communalism and subversion. The houses of the Hindus were looted. The house of the Judge Lal Kahim was stoned and arsoned by the Muslim youth. The attention of Maharaja and his administration turned to the worsening state of law and order in the city. Army was called in to control the situation in riot-affected areas like Mirpur. Thus, Sheikh succeeded in plunging the joyous and festive occasion into chaos.

Muslim Conference - Forum of Anti-nationalism

In the fast spreading fanaticism among the Muslims, Sheikh Abdullah became their lone leader. He, along with his associates, formed an organization – 'Kashmir Muslim Conference' which held its first meeting on October 14 to 16, 1932 under the chairmanship of Sheikh Abdullah. As per the resolutions passed at the above conference, their aim was to unite the Muslims by flaring up their religious sentiments and secondly, to dethrone the Hindu Maharaja and then re-establish the Muslim rule. Dr. H. L. Saxena writes about the above conference in his book, 'The Tragedy of Kashmir' – "The most conspicuous feature of the meeting of the Kashmir Muslim Conference was that neither Sheikh Abdullah nor any other Muslim leader uttered a single word about the murderous attacks on the Hindus of Mirpur. Rather, they demanded the withdrawal of army so that they could continue killing and torturing Hindus and Sikhs in that region". The grossly communal speeches delivered

in the meeting vitiated the atmosphere. Apprehending his arrest, Sheikh Abdullah fled from Kashmir on December 7, 1932 and hid himself somewhere in Punjab. Leaving Srinagar and the volunteers of his Muslim Conference in doldrums, the fugitive Sheikh resurfaced only after a month when the atmosphere relaxed.

After his return, Sheikh Abdullah was back to his craft - inciting and provoking Muslim youth and turning large gathering of people in the mosque into fanatical frenzy. The atmosphere in the state worsened leading to communal riots. When the Maharaja, through his Home Minister Wajahat Hussain and British envoy in Kashmir, Col. Calwin, tried to make Sheikh Abdullah realise the gravity of the situation, the latter deviously presented the distorted facts. Home Minister Wajahat Hussain suggested Maharaja to arrest Sheikh Abdullah immediately. Fearing his arrest, he again escaped from Kashmir and this time he was out for 4 months wandering in safer places like Lahore.

Back to Kashmir, Sheikh Abdullah resumed where he had left off - whipping communal passions of Muslims. By now, he had turned the Muslims in the state against the Hindu Maharaja and became a powerful leader of the Muslims.

Sheikh Abdullah, the British Agent

The British government deemed it as the most appropriate time to use Sheikh Abdullah as their agent for carrying out their well conceived plan and thus made him their agent. Sheikh Abdullah, too, wanted the support and blessings of the British government and some top leader of Indian National Congress to successfully launch his movement against Maharaja. Both the wishes of Sheikh were fulfilled through Lord Mountbatten and Jawaharlal Nehru.

A noted Mumbai weekly, 'Blitz', in its issue of April 24, 1965, carried a front page fact-based article depicting Sheikh Abdullah as the British agent. Exposing his anti-national and seditious conspiracies, Dr. H. L. Saxena has included the above article in

his book 'The Tragedy in Kashmir'.

Sheikh Abdullah was now operating as a full-time British broker in Kashmir. Dr. Gauri Nath Rastogi, in this regard, writes, "To become the King of Kashmir was the biggest aspiration of his life. He could go to any extent to achieve this end. Acting under the dubious advice of the Britishers, he was instrumental in creating violent and communal disturbances in the state and virtually compelled Maharaja Hari Singh to appoint Galaxy Commission to recommend administrative reforms. Mr. Galaxy had earlier served as Intelligence Chief of Govt. of India. In the name of administrative reforms, he made the Maharaja lease out the Gilgit region for a period of 60 years. He, in a way, killed two birds with one stone. First, the region of Gilgit came under the direct control and occupation of the Britishers and secondly, he got an opportunity to establish Sheikh Abdullah, as a powerful political figure. Earlier, due to the sway and influence of Maharaja, Sheikh could hardly get a foothold in Gilgit, even though it was Muslim-dominated area.

The Mask of National Conference

Sheikh Abdullah now decided to don the mask of a national leader. He desperately needed the support of a few Indian leaders and cooperation of some leading Hindu figures to capture the throne of Kashmir. His crafty persona enabled him to seek so-called guidance and cooperation from some top ranking leaders like Pt. Nehru and Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, to rise to the national politics. Balraj Madhok writes in his book, 'Kashmir, Jammu and Ladakh' about this new political drama of Sheikh Abdullah - "In 1939, Sheikh Abdullah re-named Muslim Conference as 'National Conference.' The objective behind this move was to muster the support of Indian National Congress and Indian media to materialize his political dreams. Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan played a prominent role in this behalf. He convinced Sheikh that since

Kashmir valley's population comprises 95% Muslims, in the event and manner of transfer of power he was going to be the main contender, as the top leader of the Kashmiris. This strategy benefitted him in a big way. Pt. Nehru showed keen interest in him and his politics. He made him Chief of the All-India States Conference (*Akhil Bhartiya Rajya Lok Conference*) which catapulted him on the national stage."

It shows how a regional leader, grossly communal and convenient tool in the Britishers' game plan, reached the national political arena with the blessings of Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru.

Sheikh, in the Grip of the Communists

A person who is totally blinded by the brazen lust for power could go to any extent, howsoever diabolical or anti-national. Sheikh was also trapped by the communists. When in 1942, the Quit India movement was in full swing, all the main congress leaders were in jail and Indian people were behind Mahatma Gandhi with heart and soul, to drive the Britishers out of the country, then the communist leaders of India, by labelling Gandhi as 'agent' of the imperialists indulged in 'back stabbing' the torch bearers of the movement. These communist leaders even tried to use 'Sheikh' to weaken and sabotage the movement and they succeeded too in their ulterior designs.

The 'Quit Kashmir' movement launched by Sheikh Abdullah was part of the conspiracy hatched by the communists. Sheikh Abdullah wanted Maharaja to leave Kashmir before the departure of the Britishers from India. It was with this ambition that he remained activity involved in state politics since 1931. This was also the avowed aim of the British government. Sheikh was especially picked and groomed as a leader of Kashmir by the Britishers to serve their political ends. The British government, the communists and Sheikh, all three working in unison, raised 'Quit Kashmir' movement when the whole of India was waging a decisive

battle to force the Britishers quit the country. Maharaja Hari Singh was a great supporter of Independent India. Therefore, the Britishers had chalked out a detailed plan to dethrone the Maharaja and Sheikh Abdullah was working as an instrument in their plan. The most unfortunate twist of the tragedy is that even Pt. Nehru kept supporting Sheikh Abdullah.

'New Kashmir' – A Political Farce

The National Conference, under the leadership of Sheikh Abdullah, adopted in their manifesto, the sham 'New Kashmir' movement. Behind this farcical move, three forces were at work playing their tricks. Mountbatten wanted to keep the patriotic people of Jammu & Kashmir away from the Indian freedom struggle. The communists aspired to see an independent socialist government in power. Sheikh Abdullah always cherished a longing to capture the throne of Kashmir. The manifesto of 'New Kashmir' included such frivolous aspirations and objectives as setting up of a responsible government, social, educational and economic reforms besides independent judiciary and parliamentary democracy. In Sheikh's calculative perceptions, this was possible only after ouster of the Maharaja of Kashmir.

'Quit Kashmir' Movement against Maharaja

The National Conference launched its 'Quit Kashmir' movement with all the communal frenzy on May 10, 1946. The entire Muslim population of Kashmir was exhorted to rise in rebellion against the Hindu Maharaja and the Dogras of Jammu. On May 20, Sheikh was arrested along with his colleagues which displeased Pt. Nehru. He immediately shot a letter to Maharaja demanding release of Sheikh Abdullah. Pt. Nehru not only demanded his release, he decided to come to Kashmir to advocate for Sheikh. In this context, it may be mentioned that Pt. Nehru even rejected the recommendations of senior congress leaders. The Maharaja pleaded before Pt. Nehru that the movement

launched by Sheikh Abdullah with the backing of the Britishers was against the interest of the Indians and as such he should not support it at all.

Pt. Nehru's Blessings

It is one of the great travesties that national leaders like Pt. Nehru could not resist their emotional pouring and see beyond the personal relationship with Sheikh and set aside the characteristic arrogance for nation's sake. Embattled and compelled, Maharaja imposed ban on Pt. Nehru's entry in Kashmir. As he forced his entry, Pt Nehru was arrested. This incident led to greater hostility and animosity in Nehru's mind against Maharaja. On the other hand, this arbitrary action of Pt. Nehru also sent wave of resentment among the senior congress leaders. The President of Congress party, Acharya Kriplani denouncing the movement, termed it as the most ill-timed, disgraceful, condemnable and grossly opportunistic. In 1947, when Acharya Kriplani visited Kashmir as Congress President he reiterated his view point.

While addressing a press conference, Acharya Kriplani told categorically that the Britishers had to leave this country as they were foreigners. But Maharaja Hari singh was son of this soil, how could he have been asked to leave the state of Jammu & Kashmir. Acharya Kriplani was fully aware that Sheikh Abdullah would have never been able to merge Kashmir into India. As the sole authorized person, only Maharaja Hari singh could decide about accession of Kashmir. Even Mohammed Ali Jinnah, once a guide to Sheikh Abdullah, condemned the movement calling it the handiwork of a few disgruntled elements out to create chaos in the state.

With Maharaja adopting a tough posture, Sheikh was compelled to withdraw the agitation. Fearing his arrest, he again decided, as usual, to run for cover. He had an uncanny knack of creating communal flare-up and then running away from the scene

sheepishly. But this time, his run-away trick failed as he was arrested near Uri by the vigilant police on May 21, 1946. The Maharaja ordered to keep him in Badamibagh military cantonment in Srinagar. Thus, the movement of 'Quit Kashmir' was crushed completely.

But in the entire run of events, the support extended by Pt. Nehru to the seditious Sheikh Abdullah and then arrest of Sheikh by Maharaja caused tremendous acrimony and bitterness between Pt. Nehru and Maharaja. The pitch for the problem of Kashmir destined to mar India's future had already been laid through such factors as Sheikh playing a traitor, rigid attitude of Maharaja and Pt. Nehru's lack of vision.



Pt. Nehru's Lack of Vision

The crusade for India's total freedom from foreign rule that continued unabated for 1,200 years culminated into its ignominious partition. During this long period of slavery and subjugation every successive generation continued striving for freedom and made huge sacrifice to keep the flame of the movement aglow. They never compromised their independent status. The baton of ever-growing struggle was passed on to the next generation one after the other and spirit of the struggle never waned even momentarily. But when this onus of national duty came to the Congress party, it, instead of passing the honour of the movement to the next generation, decided to stifle the movement in its life time; brazenly compromising with the National Honour, prestige and self respect.

The partition of the country took place due to the lack of will power and enthusiasm among the jaded and worn-out congress leaders. The brutal massacre of lakhs of innocent people at the time of partition was a slap on the face of those leaders who were behaving unscrupulously and deceptively, wearing mask of secularism, nationalism and pretending to be against the partition. The country was broken to pieces before their eyes. Their lust for power, pelf and position blinded them completely.

Lost in the so-called euphoria of freedom, the leaders of the nation could not see through the game plan of the anti-India forces who were never short of the sinister schemes and conspiracies to divide India. The state of Jammu & Kashmir fell victim to such forces.

Horrible Blunder

Under the new India Independence Ordinance framed at the time of partition, all the princely states of India were given the right to merge into one of the two dominions - India and Pakistan. Sardar Patel, the Home Minister of India, through his political sagacity and decisive approach succeeded in the merger of about 600 Indian states in the Indian dominion. The adamant rulers of 2 states - Junagarh and Hyderabad compelled Sardar Patel to use military force to bring them into the Indian fold.

But the issue of Jammu & Kashmir which was kept by Pt. Nehru with himself, remains a contentious one primarily due to his personal attachment to Sheikh Abdullah, his personal animosity with Maharaja Hari Singh, his deep-rooted Kashmiri ego, imperfect decision-making ability and lack of visionary attitude. These personality flaws of a great leader have brought the nation untold agonies and sufferings with the result that we have a state which has completely different yardsticks to follow than the rest of the states.

Maharaja's Confusion

In this hour of test of resoluteness, Maharaja Hari Singh found himself in a big dilemma. He did not want to accede to India due to Pt. Nehru's arrogance and obduracy. If he chose to accede to Pakistan, the future of the huge Hindu population in Jammu and Ladakh regions would be in serious trouble. In the event of accession to Pakistan, Maharaja also wisely apprehended total destruction of the thousands of cultural and historical evidences, icons of Hindu faith built and created by his own ancestors like *Math*, monasteries,

temples, vast literary collections of knowledge and symbols of Indian culture. Guided by this visionary approach and his impeccable love for Indianness, he resisted every temptation thrown by Mohd. Ali Jinnah. The geographical location of Jammu & Kashmir also added to Maharaja's confusion. The link between Jammu & Kashmir and India was only via Pathankot. All other routes were on the Pakistan side including Rawalpindi and Sialkot. Therefore, despite being fully inclined towards India, there were some factors, no less compelling, which severely affected Maharaja's resolve for accession to India.

Mountbatten – Behind the Scene

Lord Mountbatten too contributed in a big way to the utter confusion of Maharaja. According to Dr. Gauri Nath Rastogi, "Mountbatten knew fully well that in case of Jammu & Kashmir's accession to India, the crucially significant Gilgit region will be out of the control of Anglo-American alliance thus hampering their military strategy of laying siege around Soviet Union." As against this, the accession of the state with Pakistan will afford them all the facilities they look for. Mountbatten, besides an accomplished military general, was also a shrewd diplomat. He succeeded in blocking Maharaja Hari Singh from accession to India for pretty long time, influencing the Prime Minister of Jammu & Kashmir Ram Chandra Kak through his English wife and Maharaja Hari Singh through his Prime Minister, Kak.

Jinnah's Diplomacy

Sheikh Abdullah, those days, was preoccupied in his intrigues. He hobnobbed with Pakistan and in the name of Islam, impressed upon Jinnah about the significance of Kashmir's accession to Pakistan. But, on the other hand, considering his compulsions, Maharaja, as per the advice of PM Ram Chandra Kak proposed an agreement called as "Standstill Agreement" highlighting his decision not to accede to any of the countries – India or Pakistan.

Pakistan, sensing an opportunity to keep Kashmir away from India immediately consented to it, while India did not agree. Minister for Indian States, Gopalaswamy Ayengar reached Srinagar for discussion with the Maharaja but he remained firm in his decision. In the meantime, Pakistan was in a frantic hurry to devour Kashmir by force.

Jinnah, with a view to woo and allure Maharaja to agree for accession to Pakistan, planned every trick up his sleeve – moral, immoral or even military option, to convince or compel the Maharaja. He sought Maharaja's permission to stay for a few days in Kashmir. He wanted to incite and instigate the Muslims of Kashmir to revolt against Maharaja. Shri Mehar Chand Mahajan writes about it, "In Jinnah's scheme of things, Kashmir was bound to be merged with Pakistan. Like the Moghul emperors he aspired to see Kashmir on the map of Pakistan. As Governor General of Pakistan, he wanted to enjoy the luxuries of the scenic and enchanting grandeur of Kashmir to the fullest. He took for granted all the blissful treasure and richness of Kashmir and wanted to secure them at any cost.

Ram Chandra Kak's Treason

Ram Chandra Kak, then Prime Minister of Kashmir promised all cooperation to M.A. Jinnah in his ulterior motive. He tried his utmost to influence Maharaja Hari Singh but the nationalist Maharaja saw through the unwholesome alliance between Jinnah and Kak and cleverly stalled Jinnah's visit to Kashmir. This move by Maharaja spoilt the game plan of Kak.

Having failed thus far, Pakistan engineered other tactics to materialise their plan. With a view to cause economic blockade of Kashmir, all the routes to Kashmir were closed. The communication network, postal and telegraph facilities came to a standstill. The inflow of essential commodities was completely halted. Pakistan had, by resorting to this economic blockade, violated the 'Standstill

Agreement' which was got approved by Prime Minister Kak. When Ram Chandra Kak's anti India approach was exposed, Maharaja removed him from the position of Prime Minister, and in his place, General Janak singh was made the interim Prime Minister.

Pakistan's Aggression - Mehar Chand Mahajan becomes Prime Minister

When the weapon of economic blockade failed, Pakistan unleashed another weapon. The Pakistani tribals started armed infiltration into Kashmir from the border areas. It was an open all-out aggression by Pakistan. In these circumstances, Maharaja, with the help of Home Minister Sardar Patel, appointed Mehar Chand Mahajan, Chief Justice of Punjab High Court, as the Prime Minister of Jammu & Kashmir. But Sheikh Abdullah never wanted this visionary and competent person as the Prime Minister of the state. Therefore, he contacted his chief mentor and well wisher Pt. Nehru. But Sardar Patel did not let his crafty moves succeed.

Immediately after Mehar Chand Mahajan took over as Prime Minister of Jammu & Kashmir, Pakistan increased its aggressive and subversive activities in the whole region, pressurising Maharaja for accession. According to Mehar Chand Mahajan, "Major Shah, the son-in-law of ex- Chief Justice of Lahore, who was one of the top-ranking Secretaries in Pakistan was in Srinagar at that time. He could be seen moving around with the document of Accession in one hand and sword and hunter in the other. He was trying to pressurize Gen. Janak Singh and Deputy Prime Minister Batra to use their influence on the Maharaja for accession to Pakistan but without success.

Plan to kidnap Maharaja

Never short of dubious plans, Pakistan employed all the tactics and pressures on Maharaja who showed tremendous guts and resolve not to fall prey to any of them. Pakistan now hatched a plan to kidnap Maharaja. This plan has been described by Mehar

Chand Mahajan in his book, "The Bitter Truth of Kashmir" in these words -

"It was planned to kidnap both me and Maharaja and force us, on gunpoint, to agree for the accession. Our movements used to be regularly reported to the Pakistan authorities. The entire schedule of our visit to the border areas was immediately conveyed to Pakistan. The Superintendent of Police of Jammu was Pakistani spy. He had planned our arrests when we would be taking our lunch at Bhimbar guest house. Bhimbar is located on the side of Gujarat district near Pakistani border and lies on the famous Kashmir route of the Moghuls. This road runs parallel to the border and is attached to Pakistan on one side. As per our schedule, we were to reach Kathua on 20th and Mirpur and Bhimbar on 21st. Pakistanis planned to fire upon our convoy from an armoured vehicle on 21st in Bhimbar. They planned to arrest us, destroy the guest house, take control of the city administration and kill Hindus.

We were saved by a miraculous turn of events. On 20th when we left for Kathua and reached a crossing, there were two routes - one going to Kathua and the other towards Akhnoor and Bhimbar. Maharaja asked the driver to follow the Bhimbar route instead of Kathua. Initially, I argued that on the Kathua road, as per prior intimation, elaborate arrangements must have been made to receive the Maharaja while no such preparation would be in place on the Bhimbar route. Maharaja rejected my argument saying that he was not bound by any schedule. So we reached Bhimbar and Akhnoor and as we were delayed we could not visit Mirpur. All along the border, Pakistan forces were on the alert and it looked like a vast desert, a big graveyard. The Hindus moving to safer places were assured safety and security. We had our lunch in Bhimbar guest house, ordered some necessary steps for the security of the city and returned to Jammu by 10.00 P.M. On our way back, we saw

houses on fire on both sides of the road. The army with their meagre strength was engaged in restoring order and helping people. The Chief of Army Staff was also present at the site and efforts were afoot to control the arson and bloodshed. As per the planned strategy, a severe armed attack was launched on 21st from the Gujarat side – the guest house of Bhimbar was blown up. In this attack, we too would have been burnt to death if we had followed the original schedule. It was, of course, the intuition of Maharaja which saved us.”

Aggression thwarted : Brigadier Rajendra Singh

Maharaja's army gave a befitting reply to the powerful Pakistani attack. He ordered his commander Brig. Rajendra Singh to fight till the last breath to save the state. Brig. Rajendra Singh was commissioned in the state's army as a Lieutenant after his graduation. He was promoted in his ranks very fast and it was by dint of his calibre and sense of discipline that he was promoted as the Chief of Army Staff.

The fateful day of October 22 arrived. It was reported that the enemy has launched a massive attack on Muzaffrabad and they are heading towards Srinagar. At that time even the reserve force was not ready to take position. With great effort, a small force of 150 fighters comprising army men and civilians could be assorted. The security of the city was the main task for which it was imperative to block the movement of Pakistanis on the lower road of Baramullah. Brig. Rajendra Singh decided to proceed to the top of Laghu Ashray of Domail, 112 km. from Srinagar.

But Domail was captured by the enemy and they moved further covering a distance of about 16 km and reached Gadhi. In the massive exchange of fire that followed, the army men, led by Rajendra Singh, despite heavy casualty, stood the ground for some time and when he realized that his men were being cordoned off, he decided to come out with his force and return to Baramullah.

Fight to the Last Breath

Emboldened by this move the Pakistani forces advanced to Uri. Brig. Singh too, with his small group, rushed to Uri. Facing a full strength enemy, he decided to do his best to block the enemy from moving to Srinagar. He destroyed the bridge which connected the enemy's next target to their base. The heavy fighting that ensued caused heavy losses to Brig. Singh as he faced the attack from three sides. He took his men, first to Mahora and then to Rampat, on the road to Jhelum valley. They were all along being chased by the enemy. Here again, an 11-hour long battle took place. At last, when his men were fighting to secure a place of safety, Brig. Singh fighting alone, was defending his men from the rear. At this point, a bullet hit him in the right arm and then in right leg. His fire-spitting gun could still not be silenced. Soon he was surrounded and attacked by the enemy from close range. The gallant Brigadier became another martyr who sacrificed his life for the motherland.

Bamzai in his book, "History of Kashmir" writes, "Brigadier Rajendra Singh and his assorted force of armymen, waitors, *orderlies*, and cooks fought with exceptional courage and valour and earned themselves a place in the world's war history." These brave sons of Mother India blocked the advancing Pakistanis for 3 days.

Pt. Nehru creates Obstacles in the Accession

The swayamsevaks of RSS, through their intelligence net work, gathered the detailed plan of the impending Pakistani attack and likely uprising of the Muslims in Maharaja's army. They passed on this information to Maharaja much in advance. Soon, Muslim soldiers in the Maharaja's army killed their commander Col. Narain Singh and joined the Pakistani forces. Confronted by the severe test of his life and onus of saving his subject at this critical moment, Maharaja deemed it wise and appropriate to leave his personal ego for the larger objective of protecting India's sovereignty. He

immediately sent his Prime Minister, Justice Mehar Chand Mahajan to Delhi on October 25, 1947 along with the document of Accession duly signed, with the request to the Government of India to send Indian army. Maharaja Hari Singh, in his letter dated 26 October, 1947 to Lord Mountbatten, wrote clearly –

“The present dilemma and critical situation of my state leaves me with no other option than approaching India for assistance. It is absolutely natural and logical that they will not come to assist at this crucial juncture unless I opt for accession to India. Accordingly, I have decided to accede to India and the agreement of accession signed by me in this behalf is enclosed for your approval.”

It is, indeed, unfortunate for Kashmir and our nation that Pt. Nehru's personal ego and stubborn attitude came in the way at this crucial moment. Pt. Nehru told Maharaja categorically – “First, you hand over the reins of power of Jammu & Kashmir to Sheikh Abdullah and leave the state. Only then, the Agreement of Accession will be accepted and the Indian forces will be sent to Srinagar.” Nehru's adamant and irascible approach delayed the matters for 2 days. On the other hand, the Pakistan army, causing heavy destruction and committing heinous crimes like rape and arson, came too close to Srinagar. The obduracy of Nehru proved too big for the saner elements like Sardar Patel, Gopalaswamy Ayenger, Acharya Kriplani and Mahatma Gandhi. At last, Maharaja, compelled and cornered, agreed in national interest for transfer of power to Sheikh Abdullah. On October 27, 1947, the Indian army landed at Srinagar airport. The Indian army swung into action and showing great sense of duty and service frustrated the enemy and made them retreat. Sheikh Sahib, who soon after Pakistani attack had run for safety to Indore as his brother-in-law's guest, now returned to Srinagar like a state guest escorted by the Indian army, in an Indian Air Force plane. Maharaja, deeply hurt and anguished, left his all in Srinagar and moved to Jammu.

Nehruvian policy – Punishment for the Patriot, Reward for the Traitor

Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru placed and preferred his personal friendship with communal-minded and separatist Sheikh Abdullah over the national sovereignty and security. He tried his best to humiliate and belittle a patriot and nationalist, Maharaja Hari Singh. When Mehar Chand Mahajan met Pt. Nehru along with Accession Agreement, he (Pt. Nehru) thought that in case the Agreement was accepted straightaway, the entire credit will go to Maharaja Hari Singh. Ironically, Nehru wanted to give this credit to Sheikh. It is believed that at that time, Sheikh was present in the other room. Strangely enough, one who had fled for cover at the time of aggression by Pakistan, appeared, all of a sudden, at Pt. Nehru's place. The untrustworthy Sheikh who till now was indulging in acts of subversion and anti-India activities and hobnobbing with Pakistan was now an august authority in the matter of Accession and whose "consent" carried weight with Pt. Nehru! The 'traitor' was thus rewarded with honours.

It is widely known that the leaders of National Conference did not like Maharaja Hari Singh. The question arises – did the people of Hyderabad like the Nizam of Hyderabad? It is reported that what Maharaja Hari Singh did after the partition and before accession was regrettable. The question is – whether what the Nizam did in collusion with Liaqat Ali and Qasim Rizvi, was a friendly gesture and against the communalism? I want the government of India to read its own white paper on Nizam of Hyderabad and decide – who was the wrong-doer? Maharaja Hari Singh or Nizam of Hyderabad? Much against the spirit of 'catharsis' i.e. 'finally, good is rewarded and evil punished', Nizam was treated as the Head of State and entitled to receive Rupees one crore annually as Honorarium from the exchequer whereas Maharaja Hari Singh spent fag end of his life in Mumbai. My question, first and last, is – why this colossal discrimination? Was it Maharaja's

fault that he chose accession to India? Even today, we do not have a firm basis for acknowledging Kashmir as inseparable part of Indian nation except the Maharaja's clear cut and unambiguous decision to opt for accession to India." Like other kings of Indian states, the Maharaja of Kashmir, too, could have been given the status of a constitutional Head. His authority would have served as a guarantee for Kashmir's unity. That guarantee has been quashed and Kashmir has been thrown into the jaws of perennial dispute and turmoil.

Dainik Milap (Urdu) – April, 1952.

The policy of Muslim appeasement formulated by Pt. Nehru and his congress associates has handed over Kashmir to the forces of subversion and separatism, out to break this country into pieces. If the Congress leadership had shown an iota of patriotism and nationalism, they would have given the reins of power of Kashmir to Maharaja. But quite unjustifiably and inappropriately, a nationalist and a patriot who was primarily instrumental for the historic accession of Kashmir was destined and doomed to an exiled life. Having denied his due, he was forced to depart without being part of his soil, the right he so richly deserved. On the other hand, the Nizam of Hyderabad who attacked the Indian forces at the dictates of his Pakistani mentors, was awarded and rewarded with an annual honorarium of Rupees one crore!

The indignation and disrespect shown to Maharaja was in fact indignation and humiliation of all the nationalists of India. The political welcome and coronation of Sheikh Abdullah and all the rewards thrust upon him undeservingly signified the unholy victory of those anti-nationals who forayed into our land in the 7th century to convert India into 'Darul Islam'. It would be mourned as the greatest misfortune of our Indian nation and Kashmir that this great nation has been repeatedly let down and defeated by our own leaders.

The Cat is set Free

Balraj Madhok writes, "Handing over the charge of not only Kashmir valley but the entire state was more horrendous blunder than keeping Sardar Patel away from the affairs of Jammu & Kashmir." This was abundantly clear from the first speech delivered by Sheikh Abdullah on 27th October in Srinagar. The author was present on the occasion. In his hour-long public speech, Sheikh made no mention of the role of Indian government and Indian army on whose shoulders he rode to safety and power. He kept whipping the communal passions of his audience and in his typically inflammatory style stressed, "We have lifted the crown of Kashmir from the ashes. Whether we remain with India or Pakistan is secondary. Our first aim is to attain freedom." His speech depicted his malafied intentions. His interest lay in the independence of Kashmir and not in the merger with India."

Sheikh lifted his crown from the ashes and engaged himself in reducing Kashmir to ashes. What did the talk of 'crown' and 'ashes' mean? And what was that Kashmiri independence still remains a mystery. But the answers to all those historical queries are etched in the seditious portrait of Sheikh himself. The 'ashes' mean the Dogra Kings (Hindus) of Kashmir, whose 'crown' he had usurped. And this 'crown' meant those brutal and barbaric Muslim Kings whose atrocities and excesses during the last 500 years made Kashmir as the 'Muslim Kashmir'. By total freedom or 'independence' Sheikh meant establishing himself as "Sultan."

Security Council's shackles for Victorious Army

Immediately after assuming power, the subversive and anti-national mindset of Sheikh took over and exposed his true character. But Pt. Nehru's attitude towards him remained unchanged. For him, the vote bank of entire Muslim masses in the country was too tantalising to resist. He preferred to act with pigeon's mentality – 'close your eyes and the trouble goes away!' Sheikh Abdullah,

under Pt. Nehru's patronage, did everything up his sleeve to dictate terms and demoralise the Indian armed forces. When Indian army, having ensured security of Srinagar, was moving to save other parts of Kashmir valley like Mirpur, Kotli, and Bhimbar, Sheikh stopped them, with the result that thousands of Hindus were brutally killed in these areas. When Chief Commander of Indian forces General Paranjape brought these stark facts before Pt. Nehru, he dismissed them and ordered – "What Sheikh Sahib tells, follow it." The impact of that Nehruvian response was that the areas usurped by Pakistan at that time still remain under its illegal occupation. It is a harsh slur on the face of our rulers, the so-called nationalist leaders.

Passionate about supporing rose on his chest, Nehru could never come out of his flawed Kashmiriat and tilt towards the Muslims. In that sort of inebriated state, he went on committing blunder after blunder which left ineffaceable and ugly marks on the glorious and enchanting face of our Motherland. When the Indian forces moved for liberating the Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) and it was a matter of few hours before the entire Kashmir valley could have heaved a sigh of relief, Pt. Nehru, on the recommendation of Sheikh declared unilateral cease-fire. Distraught and dejected by this move of Pt. Nehru, Justice Kunwar Dileep Singh who was Indian Agent General in Kashmir, resigned from his post. Pt. Nehru did not stop at that. Without consulting his colleagues and brushing aside his military commanders, he kept towing the line of Lord Mountbatten and Sheikh Abdullah. As advised and tutored by them, he took the Kashmir issue to the UN Security Council and accordingly left it to be decided by way of a referendum. Our illustrious leader Pt. Nehru truly following the maxim of '*Aa Bail mujhe maar*' invited the gravest trouble to our nation. On the strength of this 'UN-referred' status of Kashmir, Pakistan is constantly instigating the Kashmiri youth and raising the rumpus of Kashmir's independence which has converted Kashmir

into one of the most precarious and volatile trouble spots in the world. Thanks to our great leaders with great vision! Sheikh Abdullah always wanted to complicate the issue of Kashmir to serve his own interests. If Indian army had been allowed 3-4 days' time, they would have given severe blow to Pakistan and taken control of the entire Kashmir valley as part of India. Pt. Nehru's total lack of vision fulfilled the long cherished desire of Sheikh Abdullah.

Maharaja's Complaint to Sardar Patel

The grossly anti-Hindu and anti-national misdemeanor of Sheikh Abdullah deeply disturbed the Kashmir's constitutional Head, Maharaja Hari Singh. His concern was limited to Kashmir and Kashmiri Muslims only. In this scenario, the Kashmiri Hindus and Hindus and Muslims of Jammu and Ladakh regions will be completely wiped out. Dr. Gauri Nath Rustogi writes, "The security of even the large part of Jammu & Kashmir, leave alone India as a whole, was not the concern of Sheikh Abdullah. He had an extremely narrow view of Kashmir valley. It becomes amply clear by analysing the incidents of Gilgit, Kotli, Baltistan, Mirpur, Muzaffrabad and Bhimbar. Soon after the accession of Kashmir took place on October 27, 1947, Indian army was airlifted to Srinagar. It took them only 10 days to liberate the entire valley from the Pakistani control. Now they had to move ahead for liberating other areas of Kashmir from the clutches of the Pakistani forces. The Military Governor of Gilgit, Brigadier Dhansara Singh, people of Mirpur, Bhimbar, Kotli and Muzaffrabad and Hindu leaders of Jammu were imploring the Indian army officers to come to their rescue. But the Indian army was not allowed to take action. Brig. Paranjape, the military commander of Jammu region vividly expressed his views before the Hindu leaders, "Pt. Nehru has handed over the overall command of Indian army to Sheikh Abdullah. Without his orders we can not take action."

Deeply anguished and perturbed with the communal and conspiratorial mindset of Sheikh Abdullah, Maharaja Hari Singh wrote an exhaustive letter to Home Minister Sardar Patel which reads as follows :-

“Two months have passed and the Indian forces are still in Uri. Jhangad, the mainland of Mirpur and Kotli was lost in a battle. This defeat is a big blow to us and it has dented the spirit and reputation of the Indian forces. So far, they have not recovered even a small town from Pakistan’s control. My position in this matter is extremely pitiable. As you are fully aware that I have extended my full support to Indian union with the conviction that it will not let us down. If India can not recover our lost territories and would be even prepared to hand them over to Pakistan under the directive of Security council, then there is no justification for the state’s merger with Indian nation. I am prepared to take over the command of both my own and Indian forces. The country which your Generals can not become familiar with in months and years, is best known to me.”

This letter highlights the pathetic and painful state of the Maharaja. He felt deeply hurt and disgusted owing to various factors - the fast growing helplessness of his people, seditious mindset of Muslims in the armed forces and fragile attitude of the Union government and policy of procrastination of the Security council. His conscience was terribly shaken by the plight of his people.

Mehar Chand Mahajan’s letter to Sardar Patel

Mehar Chand Mahajan too wrote a letter to Sardar Patel citing the deep sense of anguish of Maharaja Hari Singh. Referring to Sheikh Abdullah as a diabolical leader he mentioned about his fascist and ruthless administration, “This tyrant (Sheikh) who had promised allegiance and unflinching faith in His majesty Maharaja Hari Singh now wants to put him under public trial and desires the Maharaja to be content with the regions of Jammu, Kathua and Udhampur

and hand over the remaining territory of Kashmir to Pakistan-like Muslim republic, with the support of Abbas, the jailed Muslim Conference leader.

As a matter of fact, Sheikh Abdullah is now openly defying Maharaja with brazen communalism. If permitted, I can present before you the details of the activities of Sheikh depicting open defiance of Maharaja, instances which show his administrative incapability, incompetence and communal approach, the misdeeds he can commit with the help of National Guards of Srinagar. He is working with a mindset of an autocrat. On receipt of your reply, I will submit you details of instances with proof, of Sheikh's grossly corrupt and fascist administration."

Both the letters written by Maharaja Hari Singh and Mehar Chand Mahajan to Sardar Patel met their fate in the waste paper basket, thanks to Nehru's unyielding ego and arrogance. In Nehru's myopic view, all the other leaders of the likes of Maharaja Hari Singh, Mehar Chand Mahajan, Sardar Patel, Acharya Kriplani, Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, Pt. Prem Nath Dogra and various nationalist Hindu and Muslim leaders of Jammu & Kashmir lacked sagacity and wisdom. For Nehru, only Sheikh Abdullah was the 'Saviour of Kashmir' and an outstanding patriot !

Article 370 gives Constitutional validity to Separatism

Sheikh Abdullah, now openly applied himself to the larger tasks of 'total Islamisation and independence of Kashmir'. He was not Chief Minister, but the Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir. His constitution was not the Indian constitution but his own implicit constitution. His flag was not the Indian Tricolor but the flag of his National Conference. His nationalism was starkly provincial and communal in nature and spirit. The Indians were 'aliens' in their own land. They required a permit to enter the state. There were scores of subversive customs and practices doled out to Sheikh

Sahib by Nehru as 'present' to Sheikh on his ascendancy as the 'Sultan of Kashmir'. But Sheikh's displeasure and insatiability kept growing despite unbridled patronage from Pt. Nehru, support of UN Security Council and Pakistan's perpetual instigation. He apprehended that, at some stage, Indian Hindus might choose to settle in the Kashmir valley, the land of Maharishi Kashyap. He never wanted the Kashmiri Muslims to join India's national mainstream, never wanted Kashmiriat to become an identity of its age old cultural philosophy. He was deadly apprehensive about a likely scenario in which, after Nehru, the Indian parliament, in line with other states, might take direct control of the state of Kashmir. All these fears caused tremendous restiveness and agitation in Sheikh Abdullah's mind. To achieve his mission of 'total independence' it was imperative to keep the state of Kashmir separate and in isolation from the rest of India. He wanted a potent weapon which could keep his dream of separation secure and intact. He, again taking recourse to his guile, took Pt. Nehru into confidence and trapped him in another bait. Pandit ji, who had not learnt to say 'no' to his protégé Sheikh, obliged and added an ominous article 370 in the Indian constitution, thus leaving a permanent scar on the Indian Nation.

Article 370 provided constitutional recognition to the separatist ideology of Sheikh Abdullah and provided a special status to Jammu & Kashmir. It also confirmed the historical truth that a Muslim-dominated part of the country cannot be an inseparable part of the Indian nation. (Details of Article 370 are given in a separate chapter in this book).

Sheikh continued giving concrete shape to his acts of treason and subversion. Several draconian policies were implemented, such as - recruitment of members of *Janamat Sangrah Morcha* and National Conference in administration and defence, brutal attacks on Kashmiri Pandits, hobnobbing with Pakistani masters, neglect

of the people of Jammu and Ladakh and preferential treatment to Kashmir valley in all developmental projects. All these glaring misdeeds of Sheikh, when brought to the notice of Pt. Nehru, fell on deaf ears, as usual. With severely demoralized and bruised state of mind, the patriotic and brave people of Jammu & Kashmir launched a massive movement under the aegis of 'Praja Parishad' led by Pt. Prem Nath Dogra, which continued for three years. Sheikh set up new benchmarks of cruelty and barbarity to crush this agitation. The people sacrificed their lives, went to jails, bore the brunt of excesses of Kashmiri police, but kept the flame of the movement aglow. All this was not enough to wake up Pt. Nehru.

Sheikh fully exposed, Pt. Nehru relents

Pt. Nehru was also apprised by various other leaders about the conduct of Sheikh Abdullah. Those days, M.L.Chattopadhyaya, a member of Indian constitution assembly and his friend Dr. Raghuvir were on a visit to Kashmir. They met various social and religious leaders and representatives there and had a detailed discussion with them. Accordingly, a comprehensive report about the happenings in Kashmir and Sheikh's handling of affairs was prepared which was placed at the meeting of the Congress parliamentary group. The report mentioned about the objective and plan of 'independent Kashmir' as envisaged by Sheikh Abdullah. Dr. Gauri Nath writes, "While returning from the United Nations, Sheikh Abdullah himself, in an interview with the English journalists Michael Davidson and Ward Price, gave the detailed plan of the independent Kashmir. When it was published in the newspapers Sardar Patel called up Sheikh and reprimanded him. Sheikh promised Sardar Patel to desist from such things in future. But, in fact, his intentions and attitude never changed. Rather, the officer of the intelligence bureau who informed the Indian government about Sheikh's interview was forced to leave Kashmir. Sheikh kept working on his devious plans and for the purpose had

links with foreign political figures like Stevenson, the US Presidential candidate of Democratic Party, who lost the election in November 1952.

Pt. Nehru visited Kashmir in 1953. Incidentally, a 5-day session of National Conference (NC) was also in progress. Pt. Nehru himself heard the anti-India tirades and pro-Pakistan and communal speeches of Sheikh Abdullah. Pandit ji called all the senior leaders of NC including Sheikh at his residence. Nehru, by citing great instances of Indian history, legacy of Kashmir and national unity, tried to censure the caucus to mend their ways. Sheikh Abdullah, instead of following the advice of Pt. Nehru tried to ridicule him. The Director of Indian Intelligence Service, G K Handu, who accompanied Pt. Nehru as his security chief on this visit and State Home Minister Shri Kailash Nath Katjoo placed before him certain classified documents pertaining to Sheikh's activities. After examining the documents Pt. Nehru told Sheikh Abdullah, "Sheikh Sahib, I have been dealing with you till now, as Jawaharlal Nehru, but now I'll deal with you as the Prime Minister of India." It clearly shows admittance on the part of Pt. Nehru that all the decisions on Kashmir hitherto were taken by him as a personal friend of Sheikh Abdullah and not as the Prime Minister of India.

Pt. Nehru, then, sent Maulana Abul Kalam Azad to Srinagar to deliberate with Sheikh Abdullah to conduct himself. Despite being ill, Maulana went to Srinagar and had an exhaustive counselling with Sheikh. He was advised that the interest of Kashmir would be better served only if it remains a part of India. The safety of Muslims and Islam can be ensured only in India. But, Sheikh dubbed a senior and respectful leader like Maulana as an agent of Hindus and enemy of the Muslims. On his return to Delhi, Maulana giving a brief of his meeting with Sheikh, advised Pt. Nehru to remove him immediately.

Joseph Corbell, member of UNCIP mission has very rightly

and accurately mentioned about Sheikh Abdullah in his book, "Danger in Kashmir" -

"In May, 1949, Sheikh Abdullah promised Pt. Nehru - 'I want you to trust me that Kashmir belongs to you. No power on earth can cause separation between us. Every Kashmiri feels that he is an Indian and India is his motherland.' But, he kept harping on 'separate independent Kashmir' repeatedly and also declared on many occasions that the idea and concept of independence was not practicable. In 1952 he declared - 'Our state is neither under the jurisdiction of Indian parliament nor any other parliament. No country, India or Pakistan, can hinder our progress. After a few days he referred to 'Kashmir' as a 'bridge' which can unite the two countries again into one nation again. Two days later he reiterated his views - India and Pakistan enjoy durable harmonious relationship. No power on earth can break this relationship. Making a u-turn again, he said, "Kashmir is not dependent on India's resources, trade or security forces and I damn care and give no importance to the Indian assistance. Threats and intimidations can not affect me. The fact is that he kept creating a chasm between India and Kashmir and concentrated on deepening the chasm. One of his political opponents fully aware of his character, has described Sheikh Abdullah as one who is communal in Kashmir, communist in Jammu and a nationalist in India."

Joseph Corbell has quite appropriately delineated the character of Sheikh Abdullah, who displaying his true identity, crushed the movement of 'Praja Parishad'. By now, this movement had succeeded in gaining the support of the entire country. Sheikh's catalogue of dictatorial style and black laws were brought to the notice of Pt. Nehru, who found himself in a dilemma. When Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, violating these black laws reached

Jammu borders, he was arrested and sent to the Srinagar jail, where, after brief illness, he died under mysterious circumstances. This sacrifice of a great leader had shocked the entire nation. When there were loud shouts of protest, distrust and disgust from all over the country, against the misdeeds of Sheikh, Nehru opened his eyes and swung into action. He left for Srinagar to personally examine the Kashmir problem. Subsequently, Sheikh Abdullah was arrested and sent to jail.

Pandit Nehru in the midst of volley of questions

A number of significant questions arose in this context. Why did a leader of Pt. Nehru's stature turn a blind eye to the seditious and blatantly communal activities of Sheikh Abdullah for years? If he knew, why did he allow Sheikh to perpetrate his criminal rein, why did he put up with the gross affront to the nation? Why did he formulate such policies which harmed the nation and the people no end. Why did he keep personal friendship over the national interests? Or did he really wish to see Kashmir as an "independent Kashmir"?

The list of posers to Pt. Nehru does not end here. The patriotic leader, Pt. Nehru who toiled through his sweat and blood to secure freedom from the foreign rule could not stand up against the wily Mountbatten, Jinnah's anti-India and anti-Hindu conspiracies, acts of betrayal of Ram Chandra Kak and so on - why? Why did he completely brush aside the sane advice of illustrious nationalist leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Sardar Patel, Acharya Kriplani, Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, Maharaja Hari Singh, Pt. Prem Nath Dogra and others? Why was the authority of state of Jammu & Kashmir handed over to Sheikh Abdullah? What credentials did he possess? When the Indian army was advancing to save Kashmir from the enemy, came the bombshell of 'cease-fire', why? What was the frantic hurry and urgency on earth to refer the Kashmir issue to the United Nations? What was the need of article 370

which was brought, buckling under the pressure and guile of Sheikh? When the accession of Kashmir into India was complete, why special state for the state of Kashmir? Why the studied silence over the savagery and brutality unheard in history, unleashed by the diabolical Sheikh on the nationalist people participating in the righteous movement of 'Praja Parishad'?

It is undoubtedly obvious that Pt. Nehru, the Honorable Prime Minister of India was in agreement and collusion with the pro-Pakistan designs of Lord Mountbatten, Ram Chandra Kak and Sheikh Abdullah. Had Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee not sacrificed his life to awaken people, to save National Honour, to expose Sheikh and to dismiss the delusion of Pt. Nehru, Jammu & Kashmir would have gone into Pakistan's hands. This would also have established Pt. Nehru as the 'Supreme Hero', as one who played a crucial role in the break-up and division of the Indian nation!

B. N. Malik, the then Deputy Chairman of Indian Intelligence Agency unveils in his book, 'My Days with Nehru', thus, "We were totally amazed and stupefied when Pt. Nehru in total contrast, suddenly started talking with apparent firmness and disdain about Sheikh's communal-mindedness. He narrated the full history of post- 1930's Sheikh Abdullah and dwelt upon how Sheikh commenced his career with a communal organization like Muslim Conference. He told that under the external pressure and in the face of the nation-wide public campaign and, may be, merely as a ploy on the advice of some generous supporters as also with a view to project Sheikh as a non-communal leader, 'Muslim Conference' was re-christened as National Conference. Pt. Nehru turned to me suddenly and asked, "Have you received any information about the probable British support to the movement." I replied in affirmation. Nehru went on talking against Sheikh and how he continued his communal activities as a member of National Conference. The Pakistani attack had shaken Sheikh temporarily

but certainly, as the tribals had committed excesses against the Muslims in the valley. But immediately after becoming Prime Minister, Sheikh showed his true colours. He perked up anti-Hindu activities. On the other hand, he praised the non-communal conduct of Baksh and Sadiq telling that both of them were truly secularist and were fully supported by India. Pt. Nehru believed that the entire problem of Kashmir was the outcome of the communal outlook and mindset of Sheikh Abdullah. It was he who did not allow the state to prosper and grow in peace.”

B N Malik, unveiling some historical facts, has portrayed the complete life history of Nehru, his views, thoughts and national conduct leaving several critical questions about him groping for an answer.



The Movement of Praja Parishad

Background : The Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir, Sheikh Mohd. Abdullah's anti-Hindu conduct sent shock waves in the Jammu region. His reign of terror also spread to the Buddhist Ladakh. As the Indians suffered under the British rule, similarly the people of Jammu and Ladakh faced tremendous misery under the pro-Muslim and anti-Hindu policies of Sheikh. He was devoted only to the Kashmir valley. The people of Jammu, especially the Hindus were even deprived of their legitimate rights. They had to seek permission from National Conference, Sheikh's political party, to perform their social and religious rituals and functions. The Hindus were required to get permission from National Conference to visit their places of pilgrimage located in other states, for which they had to implore some local leaders of this party. The state administration was totally controlled by the coterie of Sheikh Abdullah. They let off a squib of 'New Kashmir' under the banner and flag of National Conference.

'Aman Brigade', a new unit of National Conference, set up with the active support of the State police, became a scourge of Hindus as its network started tormenting Hindus methodically. Normally, a large numbers of Dogra youth from Kandi area were

recruited in the Indian defence forces. Aman Brigade illegally took into possession the land of Dogras who were serving in the defence forces, under the fake 'Land Reforms Act'. This land grabbed with the connivance of police was distributed among the leaders and sycophants of National Conference. With the surge of Sheikh's Aman Brigade, the environment of communal harmony, social unity and fair administration ushered in during the Maharaja's rule, was completely shattered. Sheikh Abdullah was severely castigated and condemned for his excesses by one and all.

The people of Jammu were anguished over the forced exile of Maharaja Hari Singh by Sheikh Abdullah. Soon after Maharaja left the state, Sheikh Abdullah raised his demand for referendum. He resorted to the deceitful and foul means to create a political environment which could pave the way for making Kashmir an independent nation. Revealing his intentions in a press conference on May 5, 1949, he said, "Accession to either country-India or Pakistan cannot ensure lasting peace in Jammu & Kashmir. We want harmonious relations with both countries." Similarly, Sheikh Abdullah told a large public gathering in Ranvirsinghpura on April 10, 1952, that in the absence of Pt. Nehru, the Kashmiris did not see any future because everywhere communal elements (Hindus) were active and dominant.

It becomes clear from Sheikh's speech that he was taking advantage of his closeness with Pt. Nehru for deriving benefits for Kashmir alone (excluding Jammu) and for fulfilling his own political aspirations. That is why he was nursing hopes of independent Kashmir even after Nehru. Sheikh Abdullah's government also took certain political and constitutional steps which smacked of anti-Hinduism and Islamic mindset. For instance, the Hindu majority district of Udhampur was divided in the name of administrative convenience, out of which 'Doda' was created which had Muslim population in majority. Similarly, district Riyasi was divided and

Rajouri district with Muslim majority was created.

In pre-1947 Jammu & Kashmir, Maharaja Hari Singh had 10 battalions of armed forces. Majority of the officers and jawans were 'Dogras'. Immediately after taking over, Sheikh dismantled the army composition and he created a force, Kashmir militia. Expelling all the Dogras from the force he replaced them with Muslims. It is relevant to mention here that this military outfit of Kashmir militia had indulged in large scale mayhem while crushing the movement of Praja Parishad in Jammu region. The most abominable and shameful fact is that while inhuman brutalities and savagery were being committed in Kashmir and particularly Jammu region, Pt. Nehru was a mute spectator!

It is equally important to know that the 'Delhi Agreement' between Sheikh Abdullah and Pt. Nehru was only a one sided dialogue. Under this agreement the state of Jammu & Kashmir was allowed to have its own constitution and flag. Besides, except defence, foreign policy and telecommunications, all other matters were brought under the autonomy of the State government. Armed with these powers, his government indulged in all kinds of excesses against the people (Hindus) of Jammu region. This was the beginning of the 'black era' of discrimination, a kind of 'apartheid' – political, economic, social and religious.

Sheikh government held elections in 1952 for constitution assembly to form a new constitution for the state of Jammu & Kashmir. In this election, there was blatant use of every evil practice - large scale misuse of government machinery, political and communal goondaism and corruption. Out of total 75 seats, 73 candidates, all belonging to ruling National Conference, were declared elected unopposed. The people of Jammu were aghast and hurt at the brazen breach of ethics, colossal impropriety and communalism at it worst. There was large scale condemnation of Sheikh's stark communalism and prejudiced way of working. In

fact, after 1952- Delhi agreement, the people of Jammu realized that Sheikh Abdullah under the patronage of Jawaharlal Nehru was desperate to materialize his notion of 'Independent Jammu & Kashmir'. If they did not rise in unison against the crookedness of Sheikh, the future of Jammu region like the Ladakh will be seriously jeopardized.

The sparks of protest in Jammu were quite obvious. But there was no competent political party or group which could provide guidance and direction to the sentiments of patriotic people. National Conference was the political arm of Sheikh Abdullah, out to instigate the Kashmiris particularly Muslims against the Hindus and Indian nation. The Congress party, victimized by Nehru's stubborn attitude was forced to toe the line of National Conference. In Jammu region, RSS was the only non-political social organization which could guide the people of Jammu especially Hindus. The number of swayamsevaks joining the organization was on the rise. People had seen the courageous and patriotic spirit of the swayamsevaks at the time of partition and again during the Pakistani aggression. Therefore, the people of Jammu expressed their faith in the Sangh. The swayamsevaks and senior officials of Sangh also deliberated on the need to make a political forum for fighting against the anti-Hindu and anti-India policies of Sheikh Abdullah.

The Sangh had substantial presence in Jammu & Kashmir and it was the only organization which won the confidence of Maharaja Hari Singh. On the other hand, the patriotic activities of swayamsevaks were proving thorn in Sheikh's flesh. He was a die-hard Sangh-hater. Therefore, Sheikh and Sangh were on the war path.

Formation of Praja Parishad

A meeting of Hindu leaders under the chairmanship of Prof. Balraj Madhok was organized on November 9, 1947 at the residence of Pt. Prem Nath Dogra, a nationalist and dedicated

leader in Jammu. This meeting, called at the initiative of Prof. Madhok was attended by Shri Madhav Rao Mule, *Prant Pracharak*, Shri Jagdish Abrol, *Pracharak* (Jammu) Shri Durga Das Verma, Shri Kedar Nath Sahni, Shri Shyam Lal Sharma, Shri Bhagwan Swaroop, Dr. Om Prakash Mangi, Shri Sahdev Singh and Shri Hans Raj Sharma. In this 2-day '*Chintan Baithak*', a political party '*Praja Parishad*' was formed with a view to give direction to the feelings of the people of Jammu. All the office bearers of this party were elected by consensus. Shri Hari Wazir, a noted Hindu leader of Jammu and Shri Hans Raj Sharma were elected as the President and General Secretary respectively. Later, when Hari Wazir got commissioned in the army, Lala Roop Chand Nanda was made the President of *Praja Parishad*.

The circumstances in the region were changing fast with all the Sangh *Pracharaks* now working for consolidating the base of *Praja Parishad* upto the village level. Pt. Prem Nath Dogra, Shyam Lal Sharma and Durgadas Verma were made the Chairman, Organizing Secretary and General Secretary respectively. In all the districts and tehsils of the entire Jammu region various committees of the party were constituted. A large number of women too joined the party work. Bold and courageous ladies like Shakti Sharma, Mata Parvati, Asro Devi, Bimla Dogra, Suhag Rani and Shanti Devi worked untiringly and made tremendous contribution to the movement. The cooperation and response of large number of young professionals, lawyers, teachers, and businessmen was equally overwhelming. Representing youth, Thakur Baldev Singh, Mulk Raj Pargal, Prithvi Pal Singh and Jawala Prakash did commendable work. A large number of swayamsevaks and *Pracharaks* of Kashmir unit and volunteers like Shri Makhan Lal Emma, Janakinath Dhobi, Omkarnath, Devaki Nandan and Swami Niranjana Nath Kaul worked with immense devotion. Three main Hindu leaders of Jammu viz. Rishi Kumar Kaushal, Shivcharan

Gupta and Ved Mitra Gadotra, too, put in their best efforts to carry on the movement. It may be mentioned that the primary responsibility of organizing, coordinating and directing the entire work in the far-flung areas of Jammu region was undertaken by the Organizing Secretary and young pracharak, Bhagwad Swaroop.

Massive Campaign (Satyagrah)

Constituted on November 9, 1947, Praja Parishad, till November 1952, held large number of demonstrations and public meetings to convey the feelings of the aggrieved people against the unjust and unfair rule of Sheikh Abdullah. The flawed policies of the government, wrong-doings of the leaders and the discriminatory attitude of administration were fully exposed. The voices of protest calling for equal status for the state of Kashmir in line with other Indian states were getting louder and sharper. But all the opposition and cries of protest had no impact on the autocratic Sheikh. Therefore, it was felt that movement be intensified in other parts of the country outside Kashmir like Delhi as well. Under the revised plan, movement was coordinated in four stages, from November, 1952 to April, 1953.

First Phase

The first phase of the movement got underway on November 21, 1952 under the leadership of Pt. Prem Nath Dogra, Chairman of Praja Parishad. In all the districts and tehsils of Jammu region, large number of people courted arrest. The spirited slogans of '*Ek desh mein do vidhan, do pradhan, do nishan, nahin chalange, nahin chalange*' i.e. "Two Governments, two Heads and two Flags in one Country no way no way" filled the atmosphere with patriotism and resolve.

The agitators holding Indian Tricolors in their hands would sit in '*Dharna*' at tehsil and district Headquarters and court arrest. Thousands of people would assemble to welcome these patriotic people shouting slogans. Sheikh's brutal police as expected

unleashed all sorts of excesses on the peaceful agitators.

The police, pulling the garland hung around the agitators' neck would drag them to the police station. On the first night, no food was given to them. What was given was barbaric dose of torture. The people residing in the vicinity of police station clearly heard their screams and cries throughout the night. In the winter they would be bathed in cold water and beaten with sticks. Akhnoor and Ramban had maximum number of such incidents. In cold nights with no clothes, they were left to shiver and suffer. For about 15 days they were kept in police station and subjected to inhuman torture before sending them to jail. An amount of 10 annas (about 40 paise in those days) would be spent on their daily food. In every *thana* (police station), 2-3 Kashmiri Muslim officers were posted so that the agitators got the harsh and brutal treatment. The first phase of the agitation lasted for about one and a half month.

Second Phase

The second phase of the movement started in Delhi. There was total ban on the news about Jammu. Delhi based dailies like 'Veer Arjun', 'Pratap' and 'Tez' were banned in Jammu for several months. To apprise people about developments in Jammu, one paper 'Lalkaar', on litho stencil, was brought out in a clandestine manner. The duplicating machines were secretly kept in Gura Salathia, Bhadrawah and Raipur Dumana. Posters were printed in Jalandhar and the workers invented various ways to paste and stick these papers carefully. J.K. Militia men were on patrol duty in the entire city accompanied and supported by the informers of National Conference. The comrades of leftist parties and ideology too lent them support.

The last remains of a large number of people who sacrificed their lives in this movement were somehow sent to Delhi and a grand tableau carrying the remains was taken out in a procession led by Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, Mouli Chand Sharma, Dr.

Surya Prakash, Hardayal Devgun, Dr. Bhai Mahavir and 'Guide' of this movement, Manniya Madhav Rao Mule.

Third Phase

In the third phase, thousands of *Satyagrahis* from Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Bengal courted arrest in Jammu and other towns like Kathua or Hiranagar. Covering long distance and crossing river 'Ravi' they reached Jammu via Dinapur (Punjab) under police surveillance.

Fourth Phase

In the fourth phase of the movement, by the end of 1953, non-cooperation campaign was launched which gave following instructions to the people—

1. No tax may be paid to the government.
2. The tax imposed by the government on water for irrigation should not be paid.
3. The amount of compensation being a part of the food grains grown by farmers should not be paid to the government.
4. All the government employees such as Patwari, Numbardar, Jaildar and Chowkidar should submit their resignation.
5. No cooperation should be extended to the Revenue officers.

Following the above directives, Praja Parishad formed a parallel government in Mahugala (Naushehra). Thakur Sehdev Singh and Tilakraj Sharma were made the District Collector/Deputy Collector and Police Superintendent respectively. In Saher (Kaka Kot) when Numberdar Laxman Singh refused to resign, he was arrested by the rebel government and sent to a make-shift jail in a private house. Similarly, a large number of government employees were arrested. Thakur Gian Singh did commendable work in the parallel government. The Headquarter of this government was located at the residence of Thakur Hari Singh in Mogle.

The state government's attitude towards common people and the agitators was extremely harsh and it was fully supported by the central government. The government imposed collective penalty in the villages. In a village Danu near Akhnoor, the government auctioned all the animals of the village, drove women and the old out of their homes which were then demolished. The government in this manner claimed the penalty from hundreds of families. People were warned that if they wanted to be spared this treatment, they should join the National Conference. Despite this disgrace and agony inflicted by the government, people did not join National Conference. A large procession in protest was taken out in Dumana. The policemen panicked and ran away leaving their *thanas*. The agitators hoisted the Tricolor on the police station.

Second Freedom Movement

In this second freedom struggle launched to save the country people contributed wholeheartedly through their sweat and blood and did not hesitate to sacrifice their life. When *Prant Pracharak* of Sangh, Shri Madhav Rao Mule appealed to the Hindus especially the swayamsevaks to collect money from people, Smt. Shakti Sharma, wife of Sangh *Karyawah* of Jammu, Shri Shyam Lal Sharma placed before him all the jewellery that she had with her. The women, children, old and the young – everybody was competing with others to make the maximum contribution. They were prepared to make any sacrifice for the country. Lakhs of young men courted arrest while accompanying women carrying babies in their laps.

The Students on Hunger Strike

Around this time, in the annual convocation of Govt. College, Jammu, the Chief Minister Sheikh Abdullah hoisted the flag of National Conference instead of Indian Tricolor. This incident shocked the Hindu students of the college. Enraged by this indignation, the students, unruffled by the presence of Sheikh, his

police and sycophants, removed the flag of National Conference and hoisted the Indian Tricolor. A large number of students were taken to the police station and brutally beaten. Against this highhandedness by the government, about 50 students sat on mass hunger strike outside the Principal's office. Thousands of students of Jammu city and adjacent areas took out massive processions to express solidarity with the striking students. The police resorted to batons and bullets to dispel the students which left hundreds of students seriously hurt. The city was put under 72-hour curfew. A large number of students were arrested and sent to jail. The students continued their hunger strike even in jail. The police employed various methods of savagery and torture to compel the students call off their strike but failed. The determined and strong-willed students rejected the government's appeal for calling off the strike. This mass hunger strike continued for 39 days. When the condition of the students deteriorated, the police picked them up and dumped them at the doors of their houses.



Patriots achieve Martyrdom

The leaders of Praja Parishad intensified the stir. To add fuel to the fire, the government removed the flags of the Maharaja from the building of Jammu Secretariat and old fort and set them on fire. Instead, the green flag of the state was unfurled. The people were so perturbed by this incident that they came out in the streets in large number holding Tricolors in their hands, unfurled them atop the government buildings and public places. In this national *yajna*, the first *Ahuti* i.e. the oblation was given by Shri Mela Ram of Chhamb region. This young man, demonstrating all over the city alongwith his friends, reached the court premises. As soon as he hoisted the Tricolor atop the court building; he was shot dead. Similarly, another two young men Makhan Singh and Bihari Lal were killed while hoisting Tricolor on the tehsil office building in Hiranagar.

Later, the police threw their bodies on the banks of river Ravi and set them on fire. These gruesome incidents made the agitators more resolute and determined.

‘*Akhand Bharat Amar Rahe*’ and ‘Kashmir will not be allowed to become Pakistan’ – Such patriotic slogans ranted the air. People were vying with each other to sacrifice their life. In another case,

about 60 youngmen of village Nahte with portrait of the President Dr. Rajendra Prasad around their neck and Tricolor in their hands were marching peacefully. The police, without any warning, resorted to heavy firing. Six were killed on the spot. A large number of them were seriously hurt. The barbaric militia men then went to their houses and attacked their family members crossing all limits of brutality. The number of people laying down their lives was increasing and so was the police brutality. Groomed and chiselled in Sangh *shakhas*, with patriotic fervour, the young swayamsevak in true tradition of their culture and values, took the movement to the farthest corner of the region.

Excesses in Jails

Thousands of '*Satyagrahis*' (agitators) were sent to jails. They were regularly tortured and humiliated. In appalling conditions, around 50 people would be packed into one small cell. They had to do without clothes, food and shelter. The methods of torture crossed all limits of barbarity. In the Srinagar jail, two hardcore prisoners Ali Ahmed and Pande Khan were made Numberdars who unleashed extremely gruesome torture on the agitators.

Nehru's Silence

The leaders of Praja Parishad met leaders of all the political parties, parliamentarians and media in Delhi and apprised them about the terror and atrocities being perpetrated by the state government. But Pt. Nehru refused to meet them. Then two women leaders of Jammu- Shakti Sharma and Sushila Mangi met Jan Sangh President Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, Smt. Vijay Laxmi Pandit, Mridula Sarabhai and Indira Gandhi in Delhi and apprised them about the scale of brutality being faced by the people of Jammu especially the agitators. With the effort of Prof. Balraj Madhok, a meeting of 80 Members of Parliament (MPs) was called in which the two women exposed the reign of terror unleashed by the state government in Jammu. At last, at the insistence of these MPs, Pt.

Nehru agreed to meet the women. Pt. Nehru, after hearing the horrible woes and agonies being faced by the people of Jammu, took no constitutional steps to curb the brutality of Sheikh Abdullah.

On June 29, 1952, Jan Sangh gave a call to observe '*Kashmir divas*' throughout the country and lent its support to the movement of Praja Parishad. In October 1952, Jan Sangh President, Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee addressed a huge public rally and declared a nation-wide protest against the anti-India policies of Sheikh Abdullah and the gross discrimination against the people of Jammu. He personally met Sheikh Abdullah in Srinagar but it had no effect on him. The most deplorable aspect of the whole issue was that the national movement which was launched for India's sovereignty and unity was frustrated by the arrogance and acerbic stubbornness of two individuals - Prime Minister Nehru and Sheikh Abdullah. Nehru even went to the extent of saying in a press conference - "If I were in Sheikh's place, I would have acted with more toughness."

Dr. Mukherjee's Roar

The heat of the agitation spread throughout the country. The volunteers of Jan Sangh took out demonstrations throughout the country including Delhi. People from all over the country reached Jammu in groups and courted arrest. The reign of terror wreaked on these 'Satyagrahis' also became known throughout the country. Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee tried his best to forge a settlement between the government of India and Praja Parishad. He wrote to Pt. Nehru and Sheikh Abdullah too, in this regard. But Nehru, as usual, did not budge. At last, Dr. Mukherjee announced his visit to Jammu to take part in the agitation saying, "I will sacrifice my life for the integrity of the nation. We are fighting for the truth. This is the only path leading to self-rule and real democracy. Jammu & Kashmir is an integral part of India."

He blew the *bigule* on March 6, 1953 to intensify the agitation.

Breaking the ban, he led the procession carrying last remains of the martyrs. Thousands of people joined the movement leaving their homes and occupations.

Dr. Mukherjee on the Path of Sacrifice

On May 9, 1953, at 6.00 A.M. Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, alongwith some colleagues, one of them being Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, left for Jammu by train. At every station on the way, he was given very warm welcome. The whole atmosphere echoed with the slogans like - '*Permit System taur do*' (Scrap this Permit system) "*Kahan milenge - Jammu mein*" (Where we will meet? In Jammu). '*Ek desh mein do vidhan, do pradhan, do nishan - nahin rahenge, nahin rahenge*' Dr. Mukherjee addressed huge public gatherings at Amritsar and Pathankot. After 2 days they reached Pathankot. The Deputy Commissioner of Gurdaspur informed them that the government had allowed them to move to Jammu without permit. But when they reached Lakhanpur, on the bank of river Ravi, bordering Jammu, the Kashmir military police arrested them. Dr. Mukherjee told Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, "Go back and tell the whole country that I have entered Jammu without permit but as a prisoner."

Dr. Mukherjee, after his arrest, was put in Srinagar jail. Violating the protocol suited to his position, no secretary, assistant or personal physician was given to him. Confined all alone in the dark cell of the prison, he fell ill. Even news of his illness was not broken out. There was deep sense of anxiety and anguish all over the country. There was a beeline of 'Satyagrahis', hundreds of them started entering Jammu & Kashmir daily without permit. The people of Delhi and Kolkata held large demonstrations carrying flags of Praja Parishad and Jan Sangh, exposing the crimes of the tyrant Sheikh.

With the arrest of Dr. Mukherjee and lakhs of patriots throughout the country, the unholy alliance between Pt. Nehru and

Sheikh Abdullah was severely condemned. Dr. Mukherjee's prolonged stay in jail appeared to be unlawful to the central government. When Pt. Nehru offered to talk to Praja Parishad leaders, Sheikh Abdullah was furious. Then, suddenly on the morning of June 23, 1953, the news of death of Dr. Mukherjee was broadcast. The whole country was shocked with disbelief. There were cries of mourning all over the country, with no end to the doubts and suspicions about the mysterious passing away of Dr. Mukherjee. The people were openly expressing their apprehension that he had been, undoubtedly, poisoned to death by Sheikh Abdullah.

A large number of leading doctors in the country expressed concern over the media report issued after Dr. Mukherjee's death. There were lot of questions raised- what medicines, injections were administered to him at night? Why was he given treatment by Dr. Ali Mohammad only? Why was a team of doctors not called when his condition deteriorated? None of his colleagues was allowed to attend to him in his serious condition - why? Why was his Legal Adviser Barrister Trivedi prevented from meeting him and who stopped him? Even the announcement of news of his death was delayed.

A cast of bloom had swept the whole country. Nobody believed that a dedicated leader and patriot like him who had left Delhi on May 9, 1953 to serve the cause of Nation's integrity, would depart for his heavenly abode in this manner. But there was one noted personality who had genuine apprehension about the safety and wellbeing of Dr. Mukherjee. He was Shri Golwalkar (Shri Guruji). Purely out of his apprehension, Shri Guruji had sent an envoy from Nagpur with the message that Dr. Mukherjee must avoid going to Jammu & Kashmir as there was real threat to his life. As ill luck would have it, the envoy reached late. By that time, Dr. Mukherjee was close to the border of Jammu. He told the

messenger very briefly but philosophically - "Shri Guruji's message is honour to me, but I am already on the way to Jammu intending to break the permit-system. I can not retreat my steps now. I beg his pardon."

Nehru relents, Kashmir saved

The death of Dr. Mukherjee under mysterious circumstances jolted Pt. Nehru and his government. Pt. Nehru held discussions with the leaders of Jan Sangh and Praja Parishad. In their meeting, Nehru straightaway appealed to them to withdraw the movement. It was promised that effecting necessary changes in the Kashmir policy, the government would punish those who were indulging in acts of subversion and treason. On 7th July, 1953, Pt. Prem Nath Dogra called off the agitation. Pt. Nehru expressed his anguish against anti-national activities of his chum Sheikh Abdullah. He was arrested and sent to jail. Kashmir Constitution Assembly, by passing a resolution, declared the accession of Jammu & Kashmir to India. The 'permit system' was abolished. The posts of 'Governor' and 'Chief Minister' were approved in place of 'Sadr-e-Riyasat' and 'Wazir-e-ala' respectively.

Thus, Dr. Mukherjee put up a valiant fight against the Pak-aided forces of subversion and anti-nationalism. He prevented, through his resolute will power, the merger of Kashmir into Pakistan. As one who sacrificed his life and achieved martyrdom while fighting for the national integrity, Dr. Mukherjee proved that if the people of India and its leaders stand united and firm, the nefarious designs of the anti-national forces could certainly be thwarted.

Smt. Yogmaya, the mother of Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee writes a letter to Pt. Nehru ---

".....I am aware that my son can not be brought back. But I want that the people of India must know how this tragedy took place and identify, in this independent country, the part played by your government which led to this tragedy. If there is anybody

anywhere who is behind this tragedy, howsoever highly placed he may be, let the justice take its course in exposing him, in punishing him. Let the people of this country be vigilant and alert against such abominable wrong-doers so that no other mother in the country has to undergo the similar anguish and shed tears of grief and disbelief.....”

Pt. Nehru's Reply

“I have enquired those people who know the facts of this tragedy. All I can say is that I have arrived at this honest and clear decision that there is no mystery in this tragedy.....”

Mata Yogmaya writes again

Expressing her displeasure, Ma. Yogmaya writes to Pt. Nehru-

“I don't need your clarification, I want proper inquiry and investigation. Your arguments are baseless and lack conviction. You don't want to face the truth. Remember, you are accountable to the public and Almighty God. I hold the government of Kashmir responsible for my son's death. I accuse them of taking away life of my son. I hold your government responsible, too, for hushing up the matter and thus colluding with the culprits.”

Homage to Martyrs

The names of martyrs who sacrificed their lives while facing the cruelty of Sheikh Abdullah's wicked administration and frustrated the outrageous anti-India 'Abdullahshahi' are given below: -

Name	Place	Tehsil
1. Shri Mela Ram	Chhamb	Akhnoor
2. Shri Nanak Chand	Jorian	Akhnoor
3. Shri Waryam Singh	Jorian	Akhnoor
4. Shri Trilok Singh	Jorian	Akhnoor
5. Shri Krishan Lal	Sundervani	Naushehra

Contd...

Name	Place	Tehsil
6. Shri Bab Ramji Das	Sundervani	Naushehra
7. Shri Beli Ram	Sundervani	Naushehra
8. Shri Bihari Lal	Hiranagar	Hiranagar
9. Shri Bhisham Singh	Hiranagar	Hiranagar
10. Shri Shibba	Balgoh	Ramban
11. Shri Devi Sharan	Balgoh	Ramban
12. Shri Bhagwan Das	Kanthi	Kanthi
13. Shri Shyama Prasad Mukherjee	Srinagar	Srinagar

There are *Samadhis* (Last resting place/sepulchre) of the above martyrs in Jorian, Sundervani, Hiranagar and Ramban where thousands of people of all ages assemble and pay their respectful homage to the great souls.



Islamic Frenzy of Self-determination

The blunder committed by Pt Nehru has put the country in a state of perpetual predicament and ignominy. The issue of Kashmir and self-determination which is pending in the files of United Nations for the last 6 decades is easy fuel for the fire of separatism and subversion engulfing Kashmir.

In fact, India had only requested the United Nations to stop Pakistan from attacking India and ask them to withdraw their armed forces from the occupied Indian territory, but it has, woefully, failed to make Pakistan behave. Rather caught in the rigmarole of terms like 'self-determination' and 'accession' the UN has made its own position preposterous. The people who are familiar with the political development at the time of partition, know fully well that after Kashmir's unconditional accession to India, both the terms - 'self-determination' and 'accession' have become redundant and irrelevant.

The respective jurisdiction of all the three parties - India, Pakistan and the UN Security Council, with reference to the two terms has become totally illogical. Which authority can and 'why and to whom give the legal right to change into 'Re - accession'

the 'accession' of Kashmir formulated on 27th October, 1947 by the then Governor General Mountbatten. To explore the solution to this problem, one would have to analyse the political events which took place at that time.

Justification of 'Self -determination' after 'Complete accession'

The Ruler of Jammu & Kashmir, Maharaja Hari Singh signed a "Letter of Accession" and sent it to the Government of India on October 26, 1947, which states – "Therefore, I, Rajrajeswar Maharajadhiraj Shri Hari Singhji, King of Jammu & Kashmir and Ruler of Tibet, Administrator of the state of Jammu & Kashmir, in exercise of powers vested with me, in and over the sovereignty of the above states, put into implementation my written letter of Accession in favour of the Union of India."

In this manner, Maharaja sent his proposal for the accession of the state of Jammu & Kashmir to India, which was approved by the Governor General of India, Gen. Mountbatten on 27 October, 1947, stating -

"I hereby accept this 'Letter of Accession' on the 27th day of October, 1947."

Sd/-

(Burma's Lord Mountbatten, Governor General of India)

After this complete accession, Indian Government had no right to behave in a manner which goes against the spirit of the above documents. The ridiculous and unwise conduct of our leaders not only caused insult to the Letter of accession of Maharaja it also violated the 'Ordinance of Independence.' (*Swatantrata Adhiniyam*) Under this ordinance only Kings of the states were given the powers of accession. There was no mention of 'right of self-determination' for the people of the states. The fact of the matter is that Mountbatten himself wanted to keep the Kashmir

issue as inconclusive and unresolved and he certainly succeeded in his mission through the courtesy of Pt. Nehru and Ram Chandra Kak. In the constitution of India which came into being on January 26, 1950, there is no provision for referendum (*Janmat Sangrah*). Therefore, even the Government of India had no right to take up things which are not provided in the constitution. When the Indian constitution has not provided any powers even to the Government of India to re-consider such matters as 'referendum' and 'accession', it is absolutely unlawful and absurd for any international organisation to meddle in such affairs.

Even when the Constitution assembly elected by the people of Jammu & Kashmir, too confirmed the accession of the state to India, the matter should have, automatically and logically, been considered as finally resolved and settled. Subsequent to this confirmation by the state, there is no legal right, whatsoever, available to the Government of Pakistan or Security council for raising Kashmir issue, in any forum. The constitution of the state, categorically lays down in Article – 3, which reads as - “The State of Jammu & Kashmir is and will remain an inseparable part of the Indian Union”. Article-4 of the constitution says, “The territory which was under the occupation of Maharaja of the State as on 15th August, 1947, shall be part of the entire area within the boundaries of the state.”

On August 15, Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, too, was under the authority of the Maharaja of the state. Therefore, it is evident that the entire state of Jammu & Kashmir is an inseparable part of India. The Maharaja had proposed the accession of the entire Kashmir region. Therefore, on the strength of this logic, the occupation by Pakistan on even an inch of Kashmir would amount to aggression against India. This article of the constitution of Jammu & Kashmir is shielded by Article 147. On that basis, Article 4 of the constitution can never be made invalid. Accordingly, the United

Nations or Security council has no legal authority to give sermon or directive to India regarding Kashmir. However, it should direct Pakistan to vacate the Indian territory which is occupied by it illegally failing which, it can, by passing a resolution against Pakistan, advise other member nations to dissolve their diplomatic ties with Pakistan. But, in fact, Security council itself has become an arena of politics, devoid of any authority or principle. Therefore, it will be imprudent to expect anything conclusive and concrete from the UN body.

'Hide and Seek' of Security Council

When India took up the matter of Pakistani attack with the Security council, it hardly took any effective step. It simply passed resolution after resolution but did not proceed cogently, say, by declaring Pakistan as an aggressor state and forcing it to vacate the Indian territory. If India had not declared unilateral cease-fire to stop the war, India would not only have recovered one-third of Kashmir, its armed forces could have pushed deep into Pakistani territory. Even, by any stretch of imagination, if India, at that time, had a strong-willed and firm Prime Minister like Savarkar, Subhash Chandra Bose or Dr. Hedgewar or Sardar Patel, he would have allowed the armed forces to do their job and quashed all probability of partition of the country. The Britishers had already left the country and the armed forces were entirely at our command. The Congress leaders could have wiped off the stigma of partition attached to them but the 'Oxford-educated' Pt. Nehru utterly lacked diplomatic acumen, vision and sagacity.

The issue of Kashmir became a game of 'hide and seek' for the Security council. It sent a commission of Inquiry in 1948 to take stock of the situation. When the commission arrived in Karachi, a Pakistani officer Sir Zafarullah Khan admitted before it that three brigades of Pakistan army are posted on duty on Kashmir border. But he termed it as an 'act of defence,' so as to prove that it was India who played the aggressor. Two years later, on September

15, 1950, Sir Owen Dixon, an expert on International Law and Head of another commission, concluded, as a representative of the United Nations – “When the external hostile forces entered the borders of the state of Jammu & Kashmir, it was clear violation of the international law. When, in May, 1948, Pakistani armed forces entered this state, it constituted, too, the infringement of the international law.”

In this manner, Sir Owen Dixon clearly blamed Pakistan for violation of the international law. In fact, Security council, too, has accepted and recognized the accession of Kashmir to India. A US representative of the United Nations made a statement on February 2, 1948, “Kashmir is, now, not under the control of the Maharaja. With the accession of Kashmir to India, this control and authority has passed on to India and based on that authority India has raised the question in this forum.”

The Security council appointed UN observers on both sides of the cease-fire line of control. Then, through a resolution, Pakistan was asked by the UN to withdraw its forces, civilians and tribals from Kashmir, thus accepting India's position in respect of Kashmir. But Pakistan has been, for decades, disobeying and violating the UN directive. It did not cooperate in the bilateral talks held from time to time between the two countries. In 1953, Prime Ministers of both India and Pakistan agreed to withdraw the respective armed forces from Kashmir. But Pakistan again did not comply with the agreement.

Despite Pakistan's non-compliance with UN mandate, it has failed to control Pakistan's conduct. Pakistan declared an open war against India twice. On both occasions, UN brought about cease-fire but failed to bring the issue of Kashmir to a logical conclusion. The Security council has never taken into serious consideration, India's genuine complaint made in January, 1948 on the issue of Kashmir.

Shimla Agreement - Pakistan wins the Lost game

Pakistan attacked India in 1971 but faced terrible defeat. In the war, a major part of Pakistan got separated and became an Independent nation-Bangladesh. The back of Pakistan was broken. When the Prime Ministers of the two countries met in Shimla for discussion, Pakistan could have been made accountable for all its misdeeds and misdemeanour. But our leaders lost the diplomatic war on the negotiating table. The Indian government neither attempted to recover the Pak-occupied Kashmir during the war nor it adopted the firm posture forcing Pakistan to vacate the illegally occupied territory. After 1971-war, India had, in its possession, 93,000 soldiers, 5,000 sq.miles of territory and Pakistan's Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto himself. Though we were in a position of strength on the negotiating table, our leaders did not deem it appropriate to call the shots. This show of benevolence and forgiveness carries little value and significance in international affairs. This leniency is purely an act of imprudence jeopardizing the national security and sovereignty.

Hypothetically, if Pakistan had won the war and occupied a part of our territory, no international agency would have succeeded in restoration of the said territory to India. The international agencies like the UN would have proved totally ineffective, keeping in view the track record of Pakistan on Kashmir. The whole international community has accepted the illegal occupation of Pakistan over 1/3rd of Kashmir but it has not withdrawn from its invalid control of Indian territory. Ironically, it has rather won, in effect, the wars it lost to India.

It seems, curiously, to be the modern version of the events of the era of Prithvi Raj and Mohammad Gauri. The Indian King Prithvi Raj Chauhan had defeated Mohd. Gauri 16 times and forgiven him each time but in the 17th encounter when Mohammad Gauri won, he arrested Prithvi Raj, took him as prisoner to Gazni

where he had his eyes gauged out before giving him brutal death.

Prior to this agreement, the border line between the Pak-occupied Kashmiri (PoK) and Indian Kashmir was known as cease-fire line. It was, therefore, abundantly clear that both the nations had war between them followed by cease-fire. That implies quite evidently that the hostile country had occupied a territory unauthorisedly in a military action. But under the Shimla Agreement, the cease-fire line was accepted as the actual line of control. This was another victory of Pakistan gifted away by our leaders.

Pakistan has, by now, thoroughly humiliated the concept of 'mutuality.' It was clearly agreed in Shimla accord that "both the nations, based on equality and mutual benefit, shall maintain peaceful co-existence and respect for each other's regional integrity and sovereignty with no intervention in the internal affairs of each other. Both the countries will strive for solving the issues of conflict through dialogue and contribute their efforts to ensure good neighbourly relations and lasting peace."

Pakistan rejects Agreement

Here, a few pertinent questions arise – what commitment Pakistan had to forge good relations with India? Did it desist from interfering in India's internal affairs? Did it give due respect to India's sovereignty? Did it realise to owe a sense of gratitude to India for the generous and liberal attitude shown by it in the Shimla agreement? All these questions have a negative answer.

There is no reference to the issue of 'referendum' in the Shimla Agreement. Also for this reason, the UN Security council's proposal of 'Self-determination' by Kashmiri people carries little relevance. Even otherwise, a new understanding or agreement put into place by two parties, supercedes the previous agreement. But Pakistan, as usual, keeps harping on the old issues.

It is a fact that there is an attempt to paint the issue of

referendum based on the right of self-determination, with the brush of communalism. The intention behind this move is quite clear. As the Kashmir has a Muslim – majority, they want to have the ‘right of self-determination’ into place. This notion also has to pass the severe test of India’s much-publicised and oft-repeated concepts of secularism, socialism and democracy. It would not be amazing if the leaders of Congress and those expelled from Congress party surrender before this challenge for the sake of consolidation of their Muslim vote-bank. But the most painful and regrettable thing is that if it happens, who will face the horrendous consequences. The leaders of congress party, true to their character, will wash their hand off and look the other way.

Disastrous consequences of Self-determination

It will be relevant and important to refer to a letter written by Dr. Zakir Hussain, Ex-President and 13 other intellectual Indian Muslims to a UN representative Dr. Frank P. Graham on August 14, 1951. The extracts of this letter are given below -

‘It is a strange fact that when the Security council and other UN agencies, after examining the Kashmir issue, have made a series of recommendations, nobody has cared to know the views of the Indian Muslims and the adverse impact of the hurriedly-knit initiatives and measures. We are confident that without duly appreciating the condition of Muslims in Indian social system, no lasting solution can be found. When the country was partitioned the Muslim League and its leaders left the Muslims to the mercy of God. If we are, today, leading a dignified life, it is not at all due to Pakistan. They have rather enfeebled our position through their flawed policy and practice. The constitution has granted us decency and safety in terms of our religious and cultural ethos, ensuring equal opportunities for progress. Our misguided brethren in Pakistan do not realise that if Pakistan can declare war against the Hindus in Muslim Kashmir, there is strong probability sooner or later, of Hindus

taking revenge on the Muslims.

Such mutually destructive approach will only lead to untold misery and catastrophe affecting India and Pakistan in general and Indian Muslims in particular. Pakistan's policies towards India and its approach to Kashmir, in particular, can create such environment in this country which can only bring endless dilemma for the Muslims. Therefore, we want to bring to your notice very empathetically and firmly that Pakistan's policy on Kashmir is fraught with momentous perils and grave consequences for 4 crore Indian Muslims. If UN Security council wants, in all earnestness, to establish peace, harmony and international cooperation, it must address the challenges well in time.'

The above letter written to an international agency like Security council did not originate from Hindu Mahasabha, Shivsena, Vishwa Hindu Parishad, Arya Samaj or a leader of Sanatan dharma. This was from top ranking Muslim intellectuals in India comprising ministers, State *Nawabs*, Heads of Muslim organisations, members of Governor General councils and Judges. The extremists and terrorists of Pakistan and Kashmir should learn a lesson from history. The right of self-determination can create havoc in both India and Pakistan. If Pakistan rakes up the issue at the international forum advocating grant of the right of self-determination to the Muslim dominated Kashmir, it will invite the international pressure on many of its own regions. Movements like '*Jiye Sindh*' can flare up and make things worse for Pakistan. On the very basis of religion or faith, Mohd. Ali Jinnah, the creator of Pakistan engineered the partition of Indian nation and brought disaster and colossal loss to millions of Hindus and Muslims. What did he achieve from the massacre, migration of the largest population in known human history, and by pitching an environment of perpetual hostility and hatred between two communities?. Do the leaders of Pakistan want repeat act of that tragedy? Any attempt to solve the issue of Kashmir

through the principle of 'separate nationalism' would be a stark reminder that the reprehensible mindset of 'two nation' theory which plagued the partition is still alive and it will keep emerging. Our borders will keep shrinking. The areas of Muslim domination in India open to the use of right of self-determination', expulsion of Hindus from those areas while equal rights for peace and prosperity to the Muslims in other parts of the country and when their population reaches the 'majority' mark, the use of right of self-determination again and thus a scenario of history repeating itself, will come to stay. This is the lesson of Kashmir!



Patriotic Kashmiri Pandits

Victims of Islamic *Jihad*

On the occasion of our historic festivals like Deepawali, Holi etc. which provide and promote social harmony and national unity, when all Indians in their families celebrate the occasion with profound gaity and fervour, there is a section of Hindus i.e. Kashmiri Pandits who have not, for years, lit a single 'diya' (lamp) on the grand occasion of Deepawali, in their homes. They were driven and displaced from their homes, for their fault of being Hindus or Indians. Their homes, hearths, farms, shops, places of worship and faith have all been usurped or destroyed by the terrorists, anti-nationals and henchmen of the ruling party. Not just Deepawali, these unfortunate people can not celebrate any occasion of Hindu faith and festivity in their homes. Approximately 4 lakhs in number, they were compelled to settle in different parts of the country and are now leading a life of 'refugees' in their own homeland.

Scattered in various cities like Jammu, Shimla, Delhi etc. the plight of this respectable class of society is extremely dismal and perturbing. There are some people among them who have set up their own facilities for stay and survival. But majority of them are in

a pitiable condition staying in camps without much resources for proper upkeep of their families and education of their children. Disintegrated from the dazzling splendor of the valley in Kashmir they are forced to lead an arduous life. Whether these Kashmiri Pandits will ever be able to return to their homes and celebrate the joyous Hindu festivals like Deepawali is a big question craving for an answer. The first casualty of the Pak-sponsored terrorism which raised its ugly head in Jammu & Kashmir in 1989, are these Kashmiri Pandits. The biggest achievement of the Kashmiri terrorists, separatists and their masters based in Pakistan is that they have made Kashmir a State devoid of Hindus. The Kashmiri Hindus who had been resisting and fighting the traitors and foreign invaders for centuries were the biggest hurdle in the sinister designs of Pakistan-backed separatists. Embracing the 5,000 years old Hindutva- based Kashmiriat these Kashmiri Hindus, struggling honourably, stayed connected with their faith and soil. Till the advent of 14th century, Hindutva and Bharat were safe in Kashmir, but after that, Islamisation of Kashmir began and impact of foreign rulers and converts kept expanding unabated even to the modern era. Meanwhile, caught in the blood-stained grind of conversion the Hindu and Indian identity of Kashmir kept changing.

The mass exodus of Kashmiri Pandits was the most recent phase of the history of Islamisation. After the partition in 1947, the rank fanatic Islamic organizations like Jamayat-e-Islami, with the Pakistani support started driving away the remaining Hindus from Kashmir. By 1989, Pro-Pakistan elements, fundamentalists and armed terrorists had become so formidable that the Kashmiri Pandit Samaj was totally helpless and defenceless. The things came to such a pitiful stage only due to the total lack of vision in our leaders and their self-destructive policy of Muslim appeasement.

Accept Islam or Quit

The Kashmiri Pandits had two options before them- either accept Islam or quit Kashmir. The pronouncements from the mosques blared out – ‘Kafirs (Hindus) will be killed. Kashmir is an Islamic state. The non-followers and non-believers in Islam will be treated as traitors. Hindus, the agents of India, will not be spared.’ With Kashmiri Hindus around, the nefarious designs of the separatists for converting Kashmir into complete *Darul Islam* could never have succeeded. Therefore, with pre-planned programme the phase of heinous crimes got underway. There was steep rise in incidents of arson, looting, mass murder and rape. As a result, four lakh Hindus, leaving their homes, occupations, businesses, jobs etc. fled the state. Pt. Dwarka Nath Munshi has delineated in his book, ‘*Kashmir Ki Vedna*’, the plight of the displaced Pandits thus, “Separation from our motherland was painful for us, the Kashmiri Pandits. What is more agonising is living in an area, hundreds of miles away, in hot climatic conditions and the cramped camps with humidity, litter all around with no facilities. What is more tragic is the grave apprehension among the Kashmiri Pandits about the uncertainty of their future - whether we will ever be able to return to the valley, our motherland? Fellow Indians, only you have the answer”.

The pathetic condition of these Kashmiri Pandits, camping in different parts of the country, is heart-rending. They want to go back to their homes. ‘Next ‘Shivratri’ we will celebrate in our home’ is the heart-felt cry which has often been crossing their mind for the last 20 years. During these years, the governments of the state and the centre have formulated scores of plans and projects to ensure their safe return to their homes. But the fate of these politically motivated plans is no different from the fate of the homeless Kashmiris themselves. All the Chief Ministers during the last two decades viz. Dr. Farukh Abdullah (National

Conference) Mufti Mohammed Syed (Peoples' Democratic Party) Ghulam Nabi Azad (Congress) and Omar Abdullah (National Conference) cried hoarse repeatedly – "The Kashmir is incomplete without Pandits, they will be brought back to their homes respectfully." All these cries proved just hoax calls- awfully devoid of any sincerity and sensitivity.

These politically-motivated declarations and promises added insult to the injuries of displaced Kashmiri Pandits. On the one hand, all the Chief Ministers kept assuring the Kashmiri Pandits of their safe return to the valley and on the other hand, plans were initiated to convert the refugee camps into permanent structures and *pucca* dwelling units. A leader of the displaced Kashmiri Pandits, Hriday Nath Ganjoo asks, "If the government is really serious about our return to Kashmir, why are the refugee camps being converted into permanent dwelling houses. Why were the homes and shops belonging to the Kashmiri Pandits allowed to be occupied illegally by the anti-nationals? Why our places of worship and faith, our properties, by declaring them public property, are being converted into government buildings? Why the vacancies in jobs and services vacated by the Kashmiris following mass exodus, are being filled by giving employment to Muslims?"

Birds of the Same Flock

According to Shri Amar Nath Vaishnavi, a 90-year old Kashmiri Pandit, "No government of Jammu & Kashmir wants to rehabilitate the displaced Pandits in their ancestral homes. No Chief Minister wants to antagonise the separatists. All of them are captive of the religious fanaticism and fundamentalism. All these leaders are extracting millions of rupees in the name of rehabilitation and resettlement of Kashmiris, but they are, in fact, anti-India and anti-Hindu to the core. They are all alike, birds of the same flock." It is amazing that all the government policies for the benefit of the Kashmiris have been framed without consulting them. It is common

knowledge that about 4 lakh Kashmiri Hindus who left Kashmir two decades back are scattered in various parts of the country, about one lakh of them are camping in or around Jammu in temporary shelters or rented accommodations. Almost equal number of them are staying in and around Delhi. The remaining Kashmiris are staying with their families in cities like Chandigarh, Jalandhar, Amritsar, Agra, Faridabad, Jaipur, Lucknow, Varanasi, Bhopal, Chennai, Mumbai and Kolkata. Resettlement of such a large mass of people staying in different parts of the country, back in their homes is an enormous task which can be accomplished only through comprehensive planning, pragmatic approach and by taking aggrieved Kashmiri Hindus into confidence.

Schemes of Kashmiris' Return - An Eyewash

The Government of Jammu & Kashmir has, recently, constituted a joint committee comprising government officials and leaders of the displaced Kashmiri Hindus to ensure implementation of the plans for the return and rehabilitation of the displaced people under the supervision of the Ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation, Government of Jammu & Kashmir. However, the Panun Kashmir, the apex body of displaced Kashmiri Hindus has boycotted this committee. Expressing his concern, Shri Ashwani Charangu, leader of Panun Kashmir has contended that constitution of this committee is only an eye-wash. The reality of Kashmir will not change. Pakistan-backed terrorists are still very active in the valley. In last one month alone, there were 7 incidents of terrorist violence in which 8 security personnel were killed. The hide-outs of the terrorists are in safer conditions getting regular supplies of arms and ammunition from Pakistan. There is sharp increase in the number of foreign terrorists operating in Kashmir. Under these conditions, resettling Kashmiri Pandits there would be like pushing them into the open jaws of death.

Likewise, exposing the farce of joint committee set up by

state government for providing relief to the Kashmiris, Shri Triloki Nath Ganjoo, National President of Jammu & Kashmir Vichar Manch and Senior Advocate asks, "Where will the government accommodate us ? Our homes have either been burnt or occupied by the notorious elements. First, the government must act tough against the terrorists and their supporters, liquidating them completely. The government must take strict legal action against those who have unlawfully occupied the homes, shops and other properties belonging to the Kashmiri Hindus. The Kashmiri youth should be given employment in government sector. The government has announced a meagre relief package of Rs. 7 lakh per family for house repair. There are large number of Hindus whose houses have been completely destroyed or businesses taken over illegally. All these problems have to be addressed urgently by the government before thinking about the rehabilitation of Kashmiris."

In a meeting of the joint committee, Minister of Relief & Rehabilitation, Shri Raman Bhalla informed that 1600 Pandit families are ready to go back to Kashmir. Where will they be accommodated - in their ancestral homes or refugee camps ? There are, in fact, no concrete plans about it. Displaced and uprooted 20 years back, there are many Pandit families who hail from far-flung villages where they were in very small number, say 2 - 3 families in the entire village. Now resettling them in their homes after 2 decades particularly when their homes are under the illegal occupation of the terrorists, will be a hugely dangerous proposition. Ajay Bharati, Chairman of Kashmir Vichar Manch (Delhi unit) has welcomed the decision of the joint committee but clearly suggested that the return of the Kashmiris has to be made totally safe and secure. First, they have to be accommodated district-wise at one place. Whatever steps the government takes for their rehabilitation, their security and employment must be

the main areas of priority and concern. The government must take guarantee of their safety and livelihood. Similarly, another Pandit leader Shri Hira Lal Chatha too has demanded safe and honourable return of the Kashmiris. Instead of indulging in politics, the government must work honestly with a sense of earnestness and concern and change the anti-Hindu and anti-India environment which plagues the state.

New Government on old Tracks

The present government in Jammu & Kashmir, like the earlier governments, is working on a community housing project for Kashmiri Pandits in Matton, Kshirbhawani and Srinagar where 50 to 100 families would be accommodated in a complex which is extremely inadequate for a family. Also, dumping the Kashmiri Hindus, now putting up in refugee camps, in the newly built structures would make them 'sitting ducks' for the terrorists. What a sad and shattering blow it will be for the Kashmiris to find their ancestral homes usurped by the notorious elements. The government of Mufti Mohd. Syed too had built such crammed housing complexes in Matton and Kshirbhawani to accommodate 100 families in each complex. Not even a single family preferred to stay in these unsafe housing units. Now again, similar housing plans are being drafted which, as a matter of fact, are the usual ploy to hoodwink the poor and helpless Kashmiris.

It is a matter of deep anguish that the Kashmiri Hindus who fought the foreign invaders in Kashmir and sacrificed their lives to save the ancient Kashmiri and *sanatan* culture had to leave their motherland so humiliatingly. On the other hand, people who knelt before the foreign aggressors and defaced the Kashmiriat have now become the masters committing acts of treason and audaciously declaring Kashmir as an independent Islamic nation. They have destroyed the *swadeshi* Kashmiriat of their own ancestors and are treating the culture of the foreign invaders as Kashmiriat. In

this so-called Kashmiriat there is no place for the Hindus, no respect for the 5,000 year old true Kashmiri culture and glorious history; this pseudo Kashmiriat which did not grow on Kashmiri soil is culture of the usurpers and invaders. This Kashmiriat, devoid of Hindus is, in fact, Muslim nationhood.

For good sense and reason, our union government, defence forces, political parties and people of this country must appreciate that rehabilitation of Kashmiri Hindus in their ancestral homes is extremely imperative and essential for the very survival of our nation. If, with the time drifting away, these Kashmiris scattered in different places choose to settle there, it will destabilise the very basis of keeping Kashmir as an inseparable part of India. More regrettably, they will not only lose their racial identity but also have a low eagerness and longing to return to the valley. Assessing the present state of affairs, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) has made a significant observation that any part of the country with vanishing Hindu presence will, slowly but surely, get separated from India.

It is time to intensify the legal process of the resettlement of Kashmiri Hindus wandering across the country, homeless and destitute, which will also rationalise the political claims like 'Kashmir is an integral part of India' and Kashmir is incomplete without Kashmiri Pandits.' Putting an end to the political chicanery earnest efforts must be initiated without delay to create environment conducive to the safe and dignified settlement of Kashmiri Hindus. Their return to their homes will boost their morale and restore their identity. If and when the government succeeds in this noble mission it will manifest victory of '*Satya*' over '*Asatya*', good against the evil and *dharma* defeating *adharma*. The great festivals of *Vijayadashmi* and *Deepawali* will grace Kashmir, the land of Kashyap, with gaitry and harmony.

Patriotic Kashmiri Pandits

Needless to say that the Kashmiri Pandits who were driven out of their homes are the descendants of the valiant Hindu ancestors who never surrendered to the foreign aggressors whereas the present Muslim Kashmiri leaders who submitted to the atrocities of the foreign oppressors converted and became subservient to them. This historical record of cowardice and servility is delineated in the famous chronicle - '*Rajatrangini*'

Jammu-Kashmir Sahayata Samiti

RSS has, right from the beginning, expressed its concern over the increasing separatism in Kashmir and has warned the government against this monster. In November, 1989, the events in Kashmir took a dreadful turn, The assassination of a few noted personalities and leaders like Shri Tikalal Taploo, Vice President, BJP, Shri Premnath Bhat, a famous lawyer and RSS volunteer, Shri Neelkanth Ganjoo, Judge who gave death sentence to Maqbool Butt on charges of sedition and Shri Lassa Kaul, Director, Doordarshan, triggered mass exodus of Kashmiri Hindus from the valley. At that time, RSS took the initiative and a Coordination committee comprising leaders of some social and religious organisations was constituted. Under the supervision of this committee, a huge public function under the chairmanship of *Seh-Prant Sanghchalak* (RSS) Shri Vaid Vishnu Dutt was organised in Jammu in February, 1990 in which, through a resolution, government was advised to take concrete steps to rehabilitate the displaced Kashmiri Hindus. Leading Akali leader Shri Jiwan Singh Umranangal and BJP leader Shri Kedar Nath Sahni also attended this public function.

A committee, '*Jammu-Kashmir Sahayata Samiti*' under the chairmanship of Shri Vaid Vishnu Dutt was constituted to implement the aims and objectives of the Coordination committee. Showing a sense of urgency and commitment, the *Sahayata Samiti* undertook registration of the displaced Hindus and their rehabilitation at public places. It appealed to the entire nation to donate generously in cash or kind like clothes, medicines etc. RSS workers reached far off places to collect donations. The funds so collected are now being used for providing financial assistance, medicines, food, education (for children) to the families of Kashmiri Hindus camping in about 20 towns like Jammu, Udhampur, Chineni, Riyasi and Kathua.

Students' Kashmir Chalo March

The nation-wide '*Kashmir chalo*' march organised by Akhil Bhartiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) to boost the morale of security forces and challenge the terrorists and traitors and the promoters of separatism in the Kashmir valley acquires special significance. About 10,000 students from different parts of the country assembled in Parade Ground in Jammu on September 11, 1990. In this public meeting the youngsters pledged to contribute their mite to Kashmir. They intended to go to Kashmir to unfurl the National flag at Lal Chowk in Srinagar but the state government did not allow them. Despite the ban, thousands of spirited youngmen and patriotic volunteers marched towards Srinagar carrying Tricolors. They were arrested at Udhampur and after night-long lock-up in Jammu jail, they went to Delhi and staged *dharna* at the residence of the then Prime Minister V.P. Singh.

'Save Jammu-Kashmir' Movement of Women

With a view to apprise the people of the country of the harsh reality of Kashmir as also warn the political authorities about the dangerous consequences and fall-out, *Rashtra Sevika Samiti* (an all-India nationalist organisation of women) played a commendable

role. They launched a nation-wide 'Save Jammu-Kashmir' movement from 21 March to 31 March, 1991. On 31 March, about 300 women members from all parts of the country accompanied by thousands of women from Jammu took out a huge procession (Jagran yatra) and held a massive public meeting. The women volunteers visited all the refugee camps and shared the sufferings of the people. Moved by the poor condition of these camps, Sevika Samiti formed various groups of delegates to express their concern to the Union and the State government.

The Unity March

'From Kashmir to Kanyakumari, India is one - Integrated and United' - our national leaders did not have the heart to disseminate this nationalist message in the Kashmir valley. For countless years, our National days i.e. 15th August and 26th January passed by but our national Tricolour was not conferred the honour of unfurling at Lal Chowk in Srinagar. In September, 1990 ABVP attempted to hoist the national Tricolour at Lal Chowk on the 26th January, 1992. Thus commenced the unity march of BJP President Dr. Murali Manohar Joshi from Kanyakumari to Kashmir on 11 December, 1991. Its mission was to apprise and awaken the masses about the Kashmir problem.

The government tried, unsuccessfully, to stop the marchers at many places in every possible way. In one instance, the government authorities informed that the road was completely blocked due to landslide and it will take at least 3-4 days to clear the road. By that time the Republic day (26 January) would have gone by. Therefore, the plan was changed immediately and it was decided to reach Srinagar by helicopter. The arrangement of helicopter too took some time. At last, crossing all hurdles, they reached Srinagar in the early morning. In another helicopter about 40 people including Members of Parliament and some mediemen reached Srinagar. As per schedule, Dr. Joshi hoisted the national flag at the Lal chowk

on the 26th January. The dignitaries present on the occasion comprising MPs, military officers and media chanted slogans like 'Bharat Mata ki Jai' 'Long live Mother India' and gave a message to the entire world about India's sovereignty.

The hoisting of National flag at the Lal chowk was a strong rebuff to Pakistan and a crushing blow to the terrorists thus exposing the indecisive and irresolute attitude of the Union government while making Kashmir policy.



Terror in Doda Region

With the open support of their masters in Pakistan the Kashmiri separatists and terrorists are indulging in violence to continue their 'war for freedom'. Similarly, with a view to foment trouble in Jammu region too, notorious minds got together for hatching conspiracies. Aided and directed by the infamous Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), a reign of terror was let loose in the hilly areas of Doda and Udhampur. On August 14, 1993 in Kishtwar tehsil of district Doda, a bus plying on Sirthal-Kishtwar route was stopped and 16 Hindus were shot dead in broad day light by the masked terrorists. This was the beginning of the series of murders and terrorist violence. Similar attacks were carried out in Kulhand and Basantgarh in district Udhampur killing innocent people at will.

'Healing touch' for Terrorists

At this stage, coalition government of Congress and PDP in Jammu & Kashmir and United Progressive Alliance (UPA) at the centre did not take any stern steps to curb the increasing violence in Jammu region. Rather shamelessly and ironically, adding fuel to the fire and aggravating the agony of Hindus, the then Chief Minister Mufti Mohd. Syed adopted a new policy of 'Healing touch' providing government assistance to the terrorists' families. The

terrorists who surrendered were given financial assistance and employment in public and private sector. The policy of healing touch under which dastardly criminals and terrorists who carried out cold-blooded mass murders and bomb explosions were rewarded, was severely condemned throughout the country. But it had no impact on the congress and PDP. This perfidious and unabashed policy of the government was a huge humiliation for lakhs of unemployed and patriotic youngmen who, true to their allegiance to the nation, were fighting the terrorists.

This pro-terrorist government policy led to a spurt in terrorist activities. Easy money and freebies for criminals- what a shameful governance! The terrorist violence sharply increased and on the other hand, the central and the state government showed undue haste and impatience to have dialogue with the terrorists and separatists.

Flurry of Sacrifices

RSS volunteers resolved to fight against the government policies which proved a complete fiasco in curbing the separatism and terrorist menace. Leading nationalist parties and organisations like BJP, ABVP, VHP and Hindu Raksha Samiti launched a United Hindu Awakening Campaign in which various Hindu leaders, challenging the terrorists and the pro-terrorists government, sacrificed their lives. The patriotic people who sacrificed their lives and became martyrs to save the honour, life and property of innocent people, were volunteers, local leaders and functionaries of BJP, RSS and similar nationalist organisations. Such patriotic people included Satish Bhandari, General Secretary, Hindu Raksha Samiti, Kishtwar, Santosh Thakur (BJP), swayamsevak in Bhadrawah, viz. Swami Raj Katal, Subhash Sain and Ruchir Kumar. Thakur Sewa Singh and Praveen Gupta, both teachers in Kishtwar, Safdar Ali from Basoli (BJP), Mohan Singh, Tirath Ram Sharma, Pradeep Kumar and Diwan Chand from Bhadrawah. Various Sangh officials

and functionaries visited Doda on *pravas* and inspired the Hindus to put up brave and resolute fight for the sake of saving *dharma* and the motherland. The then BJP President (state unit) and M.P. from Doda, Prof. Chaman Lal Gupta visited the entire terror-stricken region several times to boost the morale of the people and encourage the youth to thwart the depraved designs of the anti-national elements.

Save Doda Movement

BJP organised a fortnight-long (June 23 to July 6, 1994) 'Save Doda' campaign to warn and wake up the government and apprise people of the country about the distressed Doda region, exodus of anxious Hindus, terrorist hide-outs in the hilly areas with stockpiles of modern weapons, alarming rise in Pak-supported terrorist violence, infiltrations and Hindu backlash. About two dozen senior BJP leaders observed *Satyagrah* during this campaign.

Senior BJP leaders like Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Lal Krishan Adwani, Rajmata Vijayaraje Sindhia, Dr. Murali Manohar Joshi, Sushma Swaraj, Kalyan Singh and Shanta Kumar led the movement and appealed to the government to hand over Doda region to the Army. Over 3 lakh people all over the country courted arrest and alerted the government about the gravity and grimness of the situation.

Impact of the Movement

This movement organised by BJP swung the pusillanimous government into action. The region was handed over to the army with special powers to tackle terrorism. The army cantonments were set up in Bhadrawah, Kishtwar and Ramban. A well defined organisational structure was put into place with the formation of Rural Security Committees at the village level. Though this movement forced the government to take effective measures to deal with the situation and enhanced the morale of the people of Doda and also prevented, to some extent the Hindu exodus from

the region but it could not wipe out the monster of terrorism. The reason being that the government, undoubtedly, was found wanting in its willpower and determination, particularly, in empowering the security forces with the requisite cutting edge to demolish terrorism. It was with this objective in mind that BJP launched another nationwide movement from Jammu, from June 7-15, 2006, propelling the government to rise from the slumber and realise the enormity of the problem. It demanded more effective powers for the security forces and provision of weapons to the rural populace for their security.

Terror still persists

Though RSS swayamsevaks have played a very significant role in Jammu & Kashmir in keeping the morale of the people high, stopping the mass exodus of people, helping the army in nabbing the terrorists and anti-nationals but the terrorism still persists in the valley due to the indecisive and week-kneed policy and appeasement politics of the governments, both central and state. The government wakes up, momentarily, after each incident of terrorist violence and mass murder and issues customary statement of condemnation. The Muslim appeasement attitude and vote bank politics of the government has completely demoralised, paralysed and let down our valiant security personnel. Even the brave and spirited people of Jammu who have fought terrorism with proven mettle have got frustrated and dejected due to the loathsome and abhorrent approach of the government. Though the terrorist outfits could not do a 'Kashmir' in the Jammu region but they are able to keep the fire of violence burning with Pakistani aid and abetment.

Supported by the initiative and trustworthiness of Sangh swayamsevaks the patriotic people of Jammu have organised themselves to fight the Pak-sponsored terrorism with grit and determination. There are, however, a large number of saner elements among Muslims who, out of good sense, are cooperating

with the Hindus in their fight against terrorism. Muslim youth have reportedly assisted the security forces and police in smashing the terrorists' hide-outs and network.

Many Instances have come to the fore where Muslim families in the rural areas of Doda, Poonch and Rajouri have refused to give shelter to the terrorists and some of them have even been killed. However, there is large number of fundamentalist and fanatical Muslims with pro-Pakistan leaning, in Jammu who deserting their duty to the nation and Hindu brethren, support terrorists and separatists. The most bizarre and disgusting thing is the vacillation and dithering shown by the governments in taking action against such anti-nationals.



Discrimination against Jammu Region

After the accession of Jammu & Kashmir to India by Maharaja Hari Singh, India's Prime Minister Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru committed the political blunder of handing over the state to the communal-minded Sheikh Abdullah. The National Conference, after assuming power, concentrated on Kashmir-centred politics and policy-making. It ushered the beginning of communal discrimination against the people of Jammu and Ladakh. Though the strong reaction of the Praja Parishad movement in Jammu compelled Pt. Nehru to arrest Sheikh Abdullah in 1953, thus making amends for his blunder but the irreparable damage of alarming proportion had already been caused by Sheikh. His actions influenced and polluted the government and administrative set-up in the state making it thoroughly communal and biased. The saplings of anti-Hinduism and anti-Jammuism planted and nurtured by Sheikh Abdullah have grown into mammoth vicious trees. As a result, today, the people of Jammu and Ladakh are victims of gross injustice, discrimination and neglect.

Kashmir-oriented Politics

With a view to ensure perpetual domination of Kashmir in politics, administration and governance of the state, all the policies

are framed keeping in view the interest of Kashmir alone, brushing aside the significant factors like territorial and demographic composition. The representation in the state assembly is grossly lop-sided and unbalanced to the disadvantage of Jammu and Ladakh as the number of electoral seats given to Kashmir is much higher. Likewise, in government employment, preferential treatment is given to the Kashmiris. Till date, every Chief Minister assuming charge in the state was a Kashmiri Muslim with the exception of Ghulam Nabi Azad who hailed from Bhadrawah in Jammu but he, too, true to the tradition, followed Kashmir-centred approach. The withdrawal of land allotted to Shri Amarnath Shrine Board for the benefit of Shri Amarnath pilgrims was his handiwork. The Council of Ministers in the state government has always had vast majority of legislators from Kashmir thus ensuring their dominance in the state affairs.

Viewed from the territorial angle, Kashmir valley is one-eighth of the entire area of the state but major share of central assistance and state's resources are allocated to Kashmir region. As per an estimate, 95% of state tourism budget is earmarked for development of Kashmir. The headquarters of all the ministries and government departments are located in Srinagar. In the matter of recruitment and selection of key Executives, Secretaries etc. there is open and blatant bias favouring the Muslims. To quote instances of such discrimination - the Veterinary colleges, Hospitals and Artificial limbs centres scheduled to be set up in Jammu region by the Central government were shifted to Kashmir. All the major industrial projects like cement, HMT watches, telephones, television, textiles etc. were installed in Kashmir. Besides, Medical, Engineering colleges and Agricultural Universities were set up in Kashmir. Major portion of the state budget is spent on the projects in Kashmir valley, with the result that for instance, all the 2,876 villages of Kashmir are well-connected to the main roads.

Large Scale Discrimination

Jammu region is the victim of discrimination and bias in every aspect. In Medical College, Srinagar, more than 75% vacancies are filled by Kashmiri Muslims. The Sher-e-Kashmir Medical Institute in Kashmir has become a central place for the extremists. Srinagar University and Engineering College have become virtual hotbed of terrorist and subversive elements due to the vast Muslim majority. After independence, blinded by the vote bank and appeasement politics, the successive governments at the centre and state, ignoring the people of Jammu and Ladakh, have diverted all the resources to Kashmir. The affluence and prosperity of Muslim youth acquired through the liberal grants and financial assistance under the aegis of article 370 have rather strengthened their roots of fundamentalism and fanaticism.

The liberal grants from the central government and abundant funding from Arab countries in petrodollars, have made the Kashmiris far more prosperous than the people of other states. The per capita income in the Kashmir valley is the highest in the country, except Delhi and Mumbai. In comparison, the people of Ladakh and Jammu region, the worst victims of discrimination are facing acute poverty. The union government's perpetual policy of appeasement of Muslim leaders, discriminatory attitude of the government of Jammu & Kashmir and lack of unity among the political parties in Jammu region have relegated Jammu as a colony of Kashmir.

All Struggles proved Ineffective

Though the people of Jammu have been struggling for decades, their distress calls and cries have fallen on deaf ears. The Praja Parishad Movement in 1952-53, Students' Agitation in 1966-67, Poonch Movement in 1979, Darbar Movement in 1987 – all the major campaigns initiated by the aggrieved people of Jammu, out of desperation and anguish, were lost in the brazenly biased politics

and crafty connivance of the central and the state government. It was due to the vociferous movement of Jammu people that Sheikh Abdullah was arrested, permit system was abolished and various articles of Indian constitution were implemented in Jammu & Kashmir. In fact, the voice of Jammu people struggling for their legitimate rights since 1947, has been muzzled with a purposeful agenda of ensuring political domination of Kashmir in state politics. The people of Jammu and Ladakh, mainly comprising Hindus and Buddhists have been suppressed to maintain the Muslim sway and influence in the state.

Infructuous Inquiry Commissions

The union government has appointed various commissions of inquiry to assuage the feelings of the people of Jammu but they were all ploys and instruments of political chicanery, lacking in seriousness and pragmatism. The Gajendragadkar Commission instituted in 1967 had mentioned in its elaborate report that the government should form 'Regional Development Board' to rectify the regional bias against Jammu and Ladakh but the state government did not implement a single recommendation of the commission. Similarly, Sikri Commission in 1968 recommended various steps to be taken by the government for giving legitimate rights to the people of Jammu and Ladakh and redress their grievances. The fate of this commission, too, was no different. Similar treatment was given to Wazir Commission in 1983. This commission suggested, in its report, addition of three more districts in the region. The most reprehensible aspect in this regard is that the unresponsive and irresponsible attitude of the state government in dealing with the recommendations did not nudge the union government to exert the requisite pressure, political and constitutional, on the former to take appropriate action.

Present Status of Discrimination

S.No.	Category	Kashmir	Jammu
1.	Area (Sq.km.)	15,948	26,293
2.	Income	Below 20%	Over 75%
3.	Number of Voters (2002)	2,88,395	30,59,986
4.	Assembly seats	46	37
5.	Candidates per seat	49.723	66.521
6.	Area per seat (Sq.km.)	346.6	710.6
7.	Lok Sabha (LS) seats	3	2
8.	Voters per seat (LS)	961,318	1529993
9.	Cabinet Ministers	More	Less
10.	Districts	10	10
11.	Area per district (Sq.km.)	1594	2629.
12.	District per Tehsil	2	None
13.	Unemployment (%)	29.30	69.70
14.	Employment (Nos.)	Over 3 lakh	Less than 1.2 lakh
15.	Participation in Sectt.	Above 75%	Below 25%
16.	Kashmiri employees	Above 99%	Below 25%
17.	Employees from Jammu	Less than 1 %	Less than 75
18.	Dailywager in PHE	Rs. 2100	Rs. 500
19.	Power generation MW	304	22
20.	Rural Electrification (%)	100	Less than 70
21.	Road Length (Km.)	71.29	45.71
22.	Road Length %	51.7	23.1
23.	Annual tourist inflow	Below 4 lakh	Above 80 lakh
24.	Expenditure on tourism	Above 85%	Less than 10%
25.	Corporation Headquarters	12	Nil
26.	Public sector undertakings	3	Nil
27.	Expenditure on Agriculture	Above 70%	Less than 30%
28.	Expenditure on Silk industry	Above 70%	Less than 30%
29.	Expenditure on Irrigation	Above 60%	Less than 35%
30.	Expenditure on Urban Dev.	Above 70%	Less than 25%

Punishment for being Patriotic

The people of Jammu are being penalised for being patriotic and nationalist. During four wars with Pakistan, the people of Jammu

extended enormous support to the Indian defence forces. They have always shown the highest reverence to the National flag, constitution and armed forces with a deep sense of allegiance and loyalty to the nation. On the contrary, people of Kashmir have, on innumerable occasions, shown indignation and disrespect to the symbols of Indian nation, namely, the National Tricolour, constitution and gallant security forces. There have been infinite number of instances in Kashmir when the Indian flag and constitution have been publicly set ablaze and Indian soldiers abused. The Indians from other parts of the country visiting Kashmir are (mis)treated as foreigners. With covert and overt assistance from Pakistan, both military and otherwise, the majority of Kashmiris harbour an anti-India and pro-Pakistan attitude. It is this mind-set which keeps them wage a perennial war for freedom i.e. 'Jung-e-Azadi' against India. This hugely shameful and deplorable situation has arrived because of the frail and flawed policies of the union government and its politics of vote-bank and Muslim appeasement. It has, consequently, pushed the country into deep chaos with unity and integrity of the country in serious jeopardy.

It would not be in the fitness of things to view the discrimination against the people of Jammu and Ladakh as merely economic and social. The gross injustice meted out to them is the consequence of Muslim fanaticism borne out of a diabolical mindset of blatant intolerance towards non-Muslims. This discrimination is the modern manifestation and format of imposition of 'Jazia' by the Turks, Moghuls and Afghani rulers on the non-Muslims. The political, social and economic discrimination against the Hindus and Buddhists in their own country is grossly humiliating to the entire Indian nation.



The Temple City becomes the City of Refugees

Once known as the city of temples, Jammu has now become the city of refugees. The Jammu region, with a population of 40 lakh and Jammu city with 13 lakh people, consist of 7 lakh refugees. The Hindus migrating from Pakistan at the time of partition, people displaced from border areas during Indo-Pak wars and lakhs of Hindus driven and displaced from their homes by the separatists and extremists consisting of farmers, shopkeepers etc. are staying in and around Jammu city as 'refugees'.

Deprived of Fundamental Rights

These refugees are deprived of various basic rights besides the fundamental rights granted under the Indian constitution. Though the people of Jammu have provided them the necessary support but the attitude of the government is totally pathetic and callous. They are struggling for survival, for their legitimate rights-political and economic, right from the beginning. Their cries for justice have met with little success. For redressal of their grievances they have implored the governments, both the central and state, and have also tried to draw their attention through peaceful *dharnas*, strikes

and demonstrations but failed to elicit any response. Though various political parties, during elections, show sympathy with regard to their woes, but nothing substantial has been done to address their problems.

The government has shown much care and concern for the Muslims who migrated to Pakistan at the time of partition by assuring their safe return and also return of their properties but it has done absolutely nothing to grant legitimate rights and minimum relief to the Hindus migrated from Pakistan and PoK. They are surviving on the strength of their own efforts, enterprise and will power. Undoubtedly, the sympathy, support and material assistance extended to them by the people of Jammu has enabled them to live with honour, otherwise, left to government's attitude, these hapless and ill-fated people would have met their horrible end long back.

The Role of RSS

As against the total neglect and apathy shown by the government, the patriotic swayamsevak of RSS have treated their Hindu brethren with compassion and concern. Through various *Samitis* the swayamsevak have done commendable work in their rehabilitation by making arrangements for shelter, food, medicare, employment and even children's education. They have provided them the moral support with human touch to enable them make new beginning with stoicism and positive approach. The swayamsevak have always stood with them to boost their morale during their peaceful *dharnas*, demonstrations and public meetings. A considerable number of people from the refugee families displaced from West Pakistan, PoK, Chhamb, Jorian, Kashmir and frontier areas are swayamsevak and they, too, are making sincere efforts to help their brethren.

Refugees from Pak-occupied Kashmir (PoK)

The territory of Kashmir usurped by Pakistan in an aggression in October, 1947 with the help of the tribals is known as Pak-

occupied Kashmir (PoK). In this 1/3rd part of Kashmir, the Pakistani soldiers, tribals and local Muslims unleashed ghastly reign of terror against the Hindus and Sikhs living in this area. More than 50,000 Hindus were ruthlessly killed in Mirpur, Kotli, Muzaffrabad, Bhimbar and Poonch. A large number of them went missing. Some of them, unable to withstand the inhuman torture and barbarism, accepted Islam. These devils in human garb exceeded all limits of cruelty and brutality committing all forms of crimes - kidnapping, rape of women, mass murders of innocent people- young and old, looting and arson. The *Wazir-e-ala* of Jammu & Kashmir, Sheikh Abdullah, instead of rushing Indian army to these places, sent them to Srinagar.

Government's Deception

The unarmed and helpless Hindus and Sikhs were left to the mercy of beastly Muslim fanatics. About 46,000 Hindus and Sikhs fled their homes and reached Jammu & Kashmir. These victims of Muslim torture were not even allowed to enter Jammu & Kashmir and were thus forced to settle in Jammu and its neighbouring rural areas. The arrangements for their stay were made in camps by the local administration and private organisations. The government announced and assured that PoK was an inseparable part of India and after the situation normalised these affected people will go back to their homes. That assurance has yet to be fulfilled even after 63 years. The people displaced from these areas were not given the status of 'refugees' as the government does not recognise the places like Mirpur, Kotli, Muzaffrabad, Bhimbar, Poonch etc. as part of the Pakistani territory.

The future of these people from PoK is suspended in darkness and uncertainty even after 63 years of suffering and pain. There is no hope, as of now, that the government will ever show the resolve and willpower to recover this area from Pakistan's illegal occupation. The ceasefire line of control which came into being as a result of

the strategic blunder committed by Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, has, in effect, become the actual line of control separating the territory of Kashmir between the two nations. There have been countless proclamations from the government in the parliament about its resolve to reclaim the PoK from Pakistan but woefully it lacks the determination and firmness to act. Even in the Agreements after Indo-Pak wars in 1965 and 1971, the issue of alleged Pakistani occupation in PoK was not taken up. The situation as at present inspires little confidence and on the contrary, the manner in which the government, ruefully, is conceding ground to the forces of subversion and secessionism is demoralising.

No Compensation

The Indians who migrated from PoK leaving behind their homes and properties-land, shops etc. were not given any compensation whereas the refugees who migrated after formation of Pakistan were given full compensation in lieu of the properties left in Pakistan and were accepted as 'citizens' under the constitution of India. Amazingly, in the constitution of Jammu & Kashmir, PoK has been described as inseparable and constitutionally recognised part of India and the state of Jammu & Kashmir whereas in the state assembly elections, 24 places are earmarked under PoK. These places, after each election, are consigned to the cold storage by notifying them as 'no election' areas. The three lakh migrants from PoK (now estimated at 12 lakhs) staying in different parts of the country have not been granted any right to participate in any state assembly elections for the past 63 years. Their struggle for the basic legitimate right continues.

Refugees from West Pakistan

At the time of partition in 1947, lakhs of Hindus who migrated from West Punjab and other parts of Pakistan were rehabilitated in different cities in north India. The gruesome carnage that was unleashed on the Hindus across the line of control and international

border knew no bounds. The families which escaped the bloody mayhem managed to cross over to Indian territory. The Hindus and Sikhs who settled in Jammu and other parts of the country were granted all the rights under the Indian citizenship. They were compensated too for the properties they left behind in Pakistan. By dint of their own enterprise, hard work and the government support they built up their homes, careers, occupations and other earning avenues for survival. Within the package of rights granted to them under the Indian constitution- economic, political and social, these refugees gradually carved out their path of progress and prosperity.

The Farce of Citizenship

But sadly, about 22,000 families, deserted and uprooted from their homes in West Pakistan, which settled in Jammu & Kashmir have not yet been granted citizenship of the state. Their population has increased by four times in the last 63 years. Majority of these refugees belong to the backward and *dalit* class. Living in pretty ordinary dwelling units, small huts and *jhuggi jhopri* from Kathua to Palawalan in Jammu region, these poor people have even been deprived of their fundamental rights. As these people are regarded as citizens of India, they are not entitled to become subject of the state in Jammu & Kashmir. They neither have the right to buy land or any other property nor join government service in the state. They do not even have the right to vote in the election for state assembly. They have the voting right only in the election for the Indian Parliament.

From Bad to Worse

The condition of majority of these Hindu refugees engaged in daily-wage labour and jobs has worsened. Three generations of these hapless people have already led a life of destitution. As they chose to settle in Jammu & Kashmir, they were denied the basic right to lead a decent and comfortable life like their brethren hailing

from West Punjab (Pakistan) who settled in other parts of the country. The Union government has never shown any concern about the indigent circumstances of these people. They have been demanding a special package to upgrade their living condition and improve their social status, but without success. They are pleading for voting right for election to the state assembly as also right to own property in the state. But their pleas and petitions have failed to elicit justice from the government, both central and state. They are also being denied the caste certificates regarding their category of Scheduled Caste (SC) or Other Backward Class (OBC). They are still staying in temporary night shelters for which rent is paid to the government without the right to carry out necessary repairs or renovations.

After six decades of dismay and discomfiture, these *dalit* and backward class refugees have not been given the certificate of domicile. They have played a big role in the progress and development of Jammu and Kashmir but government's total lack of concern about their well-being is quite disappointing.

People displaced during Indo-Pak Wars

The basic problems and essential needs of the people who were displaced from the border areas and rehabilitated in Jammu region at the time of Indo-Pak wars in 1965 and 1971, still remain to be addressed. In fact, these people were asked to evacuate their homes and fields to fulfil the urgent requirements of the Indian army. In war times, the border areas are usually used by the armed forces for making army posts, trenches and landmines. These are the times when people living in the border areas have to make tremendous sacrifice for security of the nation. They leave their homes, occupation, children's education and social engagements, for security concerns, and are shifted to the safer places. The government takes care of these displaced people and makes proper arrangements for their stay, food, livelihood and finally for their

safe return to their homes after end of the war.

People stranded in bewilderment

About 50,000 families displaced and disturbed during wars with Pakistan have still not returned to their homes. As some area of Chhamb Jorian (18,000 acres) has been possessed by Pakistan the residents of that region have joined the category of permanently displaced people. Their dilemma - they can neither go back to their homes nor has the government made adequate arrangements for their rehabilitation. Not having been given the land in lieu of the property left behind by them, a mere assistance of Rs. 10,000 per family given for survival reflects the government's insensitive attitude. Likewise, the fate of thousands of villagers who sacrificed their homes and hearths in the border areas for considerations of nation's security is awaiting justice for decades. There are also large number of people whose homes, shops or lands were either acquired on account of fencing requirements or were destroyed during the wars. Overall, the governments, both central and state, have utterly failed in facilitating the rehabilitation and redressal of the genuine problems of the refugees and displaced people.

Government denies Promises

The affected people have been imploring the governments for the rights of property which were granted to the displaced people who migrated in 1947 but in vain. It is within the powers of the government to grant such ownership rights under section 3-A of the Agrarian Reforms Act, 1976. It is the prime duty of the government to mitigate the hardships of these people and ensure their dignified place in the society.

Displaced People face Governmental Apathy

A large number of refugees in Jammu and its neighbouring areas left their moorings anguished by terrorism, but the government did not consider them as 'displaced people.' Such people belonging to the rural areas like Rajouri, Poonch, Doda, Riyasi, Udampur,

Ramban, Banihal etc are also demanding some basic facilities needed for survival. Tormented and terrorised by the militants they are now victims of administrative apathy.

It is quite unjustifiable that the people of Kashmir who faced similar circumstances were given certain basic facilities but the people of Jammu are being treated with indifference and neglect. Even the Union government has not followed the norms of equity and equality as it has announced various economic packages for the Kashmir valley but little has been done for the people of Jammu region.

Most of the Hindu families who were forced to leave the Kashmir valley due to terrorism are camping in the Jammu region. The sorrowful tale of Kashmiri Pandits, their victimisation by the terrorists, forced migration and the pitiable conditions of their camps has been separately discussed in this book. The people of Jammu region who have provided safe shelter and succour to a large number of displaced families are hard-hit by their own basic problems.



The Victory of Faith

Shri Amarnath Shrine Board

Since time immemorial millions of Hindus visit the naturally built icy *Shiv-linga* in the hallowed cave of Shri Amarnath Shrine situated on 13,500-ft high snow-clad peaks in the lap of stunningly enchanting high Himalayan mountains, surmounting the hilly terrains and dense forests. The devout pilgrims, on their way, have to brave numerous terrific natural hazards.

After independence, the management of *Shri Amarnath Yatra* came under the administrative control of the state government of Jammu & Kashmir. With the ever-growing number of pilgrims visiting the shrine, State's Tourism department's inability to make adequate arrangements became obvious. In the year 2000, the state government passed the Shrine Board Act and eventually Shri Amarnath Shrine Board was constituted. This Board comprised 10 members with Governor as the Chairman. All the arrangements and preparations pertaining to *Yatra* and *puja-archana* (worshipping) in the Holy cave came under the purview of the Shrine Board. With the new system of functioning in place the facilities improved and there was considerable increase in the number of pilgrims and devotees. A large number of services and

amenities like registration of pilgrims, *langar* (arrangement of community food), helicopter service, pollution-free toilets, mechanical air purifier systems, mobile medical vans and rest houses were made available through JK Bank. With improved services, more than 6 lakh people visited the shrine in 2007. This was a remarkable achievement of Shri Amarnath Shrine Board headed by Governor Lt. Gen (Retd) S.K. Sinha and it added a golden chapter in the history of the Amarnath Shrine.

In 2002, Shri Amarnath Shrine Board had requested the state government for allotment of 800 kanals of land for the convenience of the visiting devotees. The then Chief Minister Mufti Mohd. Syed and his daughter & PDP Chief Mehbooba Mufti not only opposed the proposal and the pilgrimage but resorted to making untenable and flimsy arguments against the allotment of land viz., pollution factor, demographic imbalance, state government's compulsions etc. In fact, PDP leaders are intensely inimical to the holy shrine pilgrimage and the ever growing number of devotees. Why do they carry deep aversion for the Hindus' places of worship and faith is best known to them. It may be recalled that when Hon. Governor extended the duration of pilgrimage from one to two months, Chief Minister Mufti Mohd Syed opposed it. He even took the issue to the court and lost. Again in 2007, the Board requested the government through a resolution for temporary allotment of land in Baltal to set up make-shift facilities for proper stay arrangement and convenience of the devotees. In May 2008, the state government placed a proposal before the ministerial meeting which was attended by the Ministers of Congress, PDP and Peoples' Democratic Front. PDP Ministers placed a proposal for allotment of land to the Shrine Board which was approved unanimously by the cabinet and the government passed orders for allotment of 800 kanals of land in Baltal to the Shrine Board with the following terms and conditions :-

1. The Shrine Board shall use the land on a temporary basis for 2 months at a rental amount of Rs. 2,31,30,400/- (Rupees two crore thirty one lakh thirty thousand four hundred only).
2. After the pilgrimage was over, Shrine Board shall return the land to the Tourism department.
3. Shrine Board shall not erect/construct any permanent structure on the land.
4. Shrine Board shall use this land only for the purpose of providing facilities to the pilgrims and not for any other purpose, whatsoever. Further, the Board shall not transfer this land to any other organisation / institution.
5. Shrine Board shall also pay to Tourism department a compensatory amount of Rs. 19,94,000/- per year being the compensation for cutting forest wood on the land.

Separatist Furore in Kashmir

After allotment of land by the government the construction of temporary structures got under way which gave people all over the country a cause for cheer and rejoice. Pro-Pakistan leaders like Mirwaiz Omar Farokh, Chairman, Huriyat Conference, Tehrik-e-Huriyat Chairman Syed Ali Shah Gilani, Shabir Shah of Democratic Freedom Party and Yasin Malik of J&K Liberation Front (JKLF) could not stomach this new-found enthusiasm among Hindus and the religious facilities they were given in Kashmir. They openly started vehement and bitter opposition to the allotment of land to the Shrine board. Anti-India and anti-Hindu leaders instigated the people of Kashmir to come out in the streets. The separatists began a campaign to vilify and disparage the Hindu organisations and Indian government. All types of lies and canards were spread to mislead the people into believing that Hindu culture was being imposed on the Kashmiris and Government of India was out to destroy their culture. Together with this Pakistani flags

began to be unfurled all over Kashmir valley.

The Indian Tricolors were burnt. Anti-India wave swept across Kashmir and anti-national slogans like 'Pakistan zindabad', 'we want - freedom', 'Islamic and Muslim rule will come soon', etc. echoed in the valley. Charging the atmosphere with extreme anti-nationalism, inflammatory and seditious exhortations kept blaring out from the mosques, *Idgahs* and hotels, calling upon the people to wage war (Jihad) against India and Indian government officials. Hindu businessmen and traders, poor daily wage earners and tourists were threatened to leave Kashmir. Several incidents of bullying and beating innocent people were also reported. Showing gruesome wickedness and crossing all limits of barbarity their houses were burnt, they were stripped and forced to raise pro-Pakistani slogans. Worse, the government, as usual, kept watching from the fence.

Politics of Vote-Bank

When the entire atmosphere became vitiated with anti-Indian and anti-Hindu stance and the people of Kashmir stood up behind the separatist parties like Huriyat Conference, PDP found its popular base shrinking. Astonishingly, ex-Dy. CM Muzaffar Beg and PDP Chief Ms Mehbooba Mufti alongwith their party, which was one of the parties favouring allotment of land to the Shrine Board, changed their colours, as true chameleons and became cohorts of the other separatists and joined the chorus for cancellation of land allotment. Seeing PDP enlarging its base among the Kashmiris, National Conference (NC) developed cold feet. Its Supremo Dr Farokh Abdullah and his son Omar Abdullah, Chairman, NC changed their known stand and shamelessly joined the ranks of the separatists.

After *Jumme-Namaaz* on Friday, Mirwaiz Omar Farukh, Chairman of Huriyat Conference instigating the Kashmiri Muslims made a provocative statement. He mentioned that the issue was

not just linked to the withdrawal of 800 kanals of land from Shri Amarnath Shrine Board, it was the question of Kashmiri culture, identity and Kashmiri nationality. He further added that lakhs of kanals of their land was in the possession of the *Hindustanis* (Indians) and *Hindustani Fauj* (Indian army) and they wanted freedom from the gun-wielding and oppressive Indian army. Similarly, Syed Ali Shah Gilani, leader of *Tehrik-e-Huriyat* termed their present stir as the beginning of a long drawn struggle. He added that they wanted to free Kashmiris from the stranglehold of the Indians who had converted Kashmir into their colony. Similarly, Muzaffar Beg, PDP leader and ex-Dy CM, made another grossly communal address saying that the issue related to Kashmir and Kashmiriat and there was no question of withdrawal and retreat. He even called Shri Amarnath Shrine Board as the most communal organisation. Ex-Governor and his Chief Secretary wanted to set things on fire here. In his words – “So what if people of Jammu have threatened to block our supply line, our second route (Srinagar –Muzaffrabad) is ready. I am speaking on behalf of my nation (Kashmir).” On the other hand, Ms Mehbooba Mufti and Omar Abdullah, both these leaders too left no stone unturned in expressing their full-fledged anti-India mindset when they played the same tune which other pro-separatists did. They declared that the whole issue was connected to the Kashmiri nationality and allotment of land to the Shrine Board would pose a grave threat to the Kashmiris’ identity.

Instead of dealing firmly with the malicious anti-India and anti-Hindu upsurge in Kashmir which was now becoming more and more apparent, the Congress-led coalition government of J&K chose to bow down to the separatists keeping in view, as usual, its vote bank and electoral gains. On the other hand, PDP leader Mufti Mohd. Syed threatened to withdraw support to the government. Initially, to counter the threat, Ghulam Nabi Azad tried

to save his government. When collapse of his government became obvious, Azad submitted his government's resignation. In the meanwhile, Governor S.K. Sinha retired and in his place N. N. Vohra was appointed as Governor of Jammu & Kashmir. Immediately after reaching Srinagar, the Governor issued a letter to Shri Ghulam Nabi Azad, CM asking whether the government could make arrangements for the Amarnath pilgrimage. The Chief Minister, as if waiting to be asked, promptly affirmed. The Governor, showing undue haste and without consulting the Shrine Board, issued a letter to the government stating that Shri Amarnath Shrine Board did not have the requisite resources and was unable to make proper arrangements for the Amarnath *Yatra*. Whereas the manner in which the Shrine Board had successfully conducted the pilgrimage for the last eight years got tremendous admiration and appreciation both within the country and from abroad.

An Unconstitutional Decision

This was an absolutely unconstitutional decision of Governor N. N. Vohra. Hon. Governor did not even deem it appropriate to look into the fact that Shri Amarnath Shrine Board was constituted in accordance with the relevant Shrine Board Act passed by the state assembly. Therefore, the authority to effect any change in this regard rested with the state assembly. Under clause -16 of the Act, it is abundantly clear that the mechanism of control and management of the *Yatra* entrusted to the Shrine Board can not be transferred to any other party or authority.

The transfer of land and the management of the *Yatra* from the Shrine Board to the state government and then to the Tourism department sent waves of jubilation among the separatists and like-minded parties including PDP, National Conference etc. They celebrated the occasion by organising a function - '*Namaz-e-shukrana*' (Thanks to Allah) in Srinagar. In this function they hailed the government's order of withdrawal of the land as the victory of

Muslims and proclaimed to intensify their *Jang-e-Azadi* (fight for freedom).

Formation of *Shri Amarnath Yatra Sangharsha Samiti*

The way Hindus were humiliated and the government played with the religious sentiments of crores of devotees of Lord Shiva and Shri Amarnath Shrine, the Holy place of Hindu faith, invited scathing criticism with reverberation all over the country. There was terrible resentment and bitterness among the Hindus of Jammu region. On the call of Vishwa Hindu Parishad, an emergency meeting of about 40 Hindu organisations took place in Geeta Bhawan, Jammu. By way of an unanimous decision in this meeting, *Shri Amarnath Yatra Sangharsha Samiti* was formed. There was detailed discussion on every aspect of this holy struggle which was intended to defend Hindu faith and conviction. It was unanimously decided that the movement will continue till the land was restored to the Shrine Board and it was felt imperative to keep the fight away from politics and work untiringly to make the Hindu unity stronger. Advocate Leela Karan Sharma, an eminent lawyer of Jammu High Court was unanimously chosen the Convener of the *Samiti*.

Shri Amarnath Yatra Sangharsha Samiti passed four resolutions and warned the government that in view of the bruised sentiments of Hindus the land should be restored to the Shrine Board without delay. Through these resolutions, President of India was requested that, to avoid the situation getting out of hand, the Governor N.N. Vohra should be recalled as the people of Jammu will not allow him to act as agent of the Congress party. Secondly, it was appealed to the President that by immediately dismissing the government led by Ghulam Nabi Azad, a man following double standards, the state be put under President's rule by installing a nationalist Governor. Thirdly, the leaders indulging in making anti-

India and pro-Pakistan speeches in Kashmir must be arrested and prosecuted on charges of sedition. It was mentioned in the resolutions that the restoration of land alongwith the relevant rights, must be done immediately to respect the sentiments of crores of Hindus in India and abroad. *Shri Amarnath Yatra* is a matter of religious integrity and harmony for all the citizens in the country and therefore no undue government intervention in this regard, will be accepted by the people. Any government intervention, which is uncalled for, will only strengthen the forces of separatism. If the government is unable to transfer the land to the Shrine Board, then it (the government) must withdraw or cancel the Haj subsidy and the land given to the Islamic Universities, Jammu's Haj guest houses and other Muslim organisations throughout the country for undertaking their religious activities.

Through the fourth resolution, the *Sangharsha Samiti* fervently appealed to various Hindu organisations in the country to unite and join the holy struggle. Emphasising the agony of the people of Jammu it was mentioned that this struggle is not only related to the people of Jammu and Kashmiri Pandits, it is the symbol of faith and conviction of the entire country and the unity of Hindu Samaj. The *Sangharsha Samiti* urged upon all the Hindu organisations, saints, seers, sages, religious leaders, *Shankaracharyas* and monastics to come out of their huts, temples and monasteries and lead the nation-wide holy struggle against the patently unjust, unfair and anti-national decision.

Relentless Mass movement

In response to the call given by the *Samiti*, entire Jammu region remained closed indefinitely. A large number of demonstrations, processions and public meetings were held. At various places, police resorted to *lathi charge*, tear gas and firing in which hundreds of people were injured. Hundreds of workers of *Sangharsha Samiti* were arrested and sent to jail. The police's harsh handling

aggravated the situation and further intensified this struggle. Entire *Hindu Samaj* comprising old and young, men and women took part in this holy struggle with great enthusiasm. To a call given by Vishwa Hindu Parishad a nation-wide *Bandh* was observed on the 3rd July, 2008 in support of the movement. The state government tried to muzzle the voice of the patriotic people of Jammu by clamping curfew in the areas of Jammu, Samba, Kathua, R S pura, Bhadrawah, Badi Brahmana etc. It had absolutely no impact on the people as, braving the curfew, they came out in large number to take out rallies and processions.

As the police brutality increased, the public unrest became more widespread and the number of people joining the struggle went up many-fold. The slogans of *Bharat Mata ki Jai*, *Jai Shri Amarnath*, *Bum Bum Bhole*, *Jai Shivshankar* etc. reverberated in the entire region. At various places, people held demonstrations carrying huge pictures of *Bharat Mata*. The youngmen and children took out tableaux of Lord Shiva with *Trishul* in His hand. They assembled at every *chowk* and *chaupal* and unfurled the Tricolors. The protestors sang devotional songs, performed *Kirtan* of Lord Shiva and chanted *Ram dhun*. The processionists staged *dharnas* before the houses of MLAs and ardently appealed to them to extend their support to the *Sangharsha Samiti*.

The remarkable aspect of this struggle was that people of all religions - Muslims, Sikhs, Hindus, Christians, Boudh as also Gujjars and Bakarwals joined it which soon turned into the most popular movement of the people of the state.

Martyrdom to save Hindutva

The countrymen can never overlook the supreme sacrifice of the patriotic people for protecting the self-esteem and honour of the pilgrims and devotees of Lord Shiva and *Shri Amarnath Yatra* which is symbol of our national unity. Whenever the saga of success of this movement will be discussed people would remember the

martyrs with due reverence. Their sacrifice will always serve as a benchmark and source of inspiration for generations to come. The history of this miniature movement in defence of Hindu faith will remain incomplete without reference to the indomitable spirit and sacrifice of its martyrs.

Martyr Manjeet Singh

In this nationalist movement, the first brave man to sacrifice his life was Manjeet Singh, resident of Bhadrawah. On the 2nd July, *Sangharsha Samiti* organised a large public meeting followed by a procession. This large gathering of Hindus did not go well with the administration and some sections of people who are in majority in the state. The miscreants threw a grenade at the peaceful procession which injured about 36 people. Manjeet Singh was one of the injured. On the 6th July, he passed away in the hospital. After post-mortem, the police, showing utter callousness, lifted his dead body and instead of handing it over to the waiting relatives passed it to the residents of his village. The local residents performed very respectfully the cremation ceremony of this valiant martyr.

Martyr Ramesh Kumar

On the 7th July, Ramesh Kumar, a resident of Pir Mittha area of Jammu was on his way to nearby Lakhdatta bazar to buy certain essential provisions. The police stopped him and as he turned back to his home, policemen started beating him with *lathis*. Fearing for his life, he started running and the police chased him. Ramesh rushed into his house and climbed to the 4th storey. He was being closely followed by a police officer. As he jumped from his roof to the other side across the street to save his life, he fell down in the street. Ramesh Kumar suffered severe head injury which proved fatal.

Martyr Kuldeep Dogra

The supreme sacrifice of one Kuldeep Dogra, 38, resident of

Basti Talaab Tillo in Jammu contributed most in transforming the movement spearheaded by *Shri Amarnath Yatra Sangharsha Samiti* into a Peoples' movement. In accordance with the *Sangharsha Samiti's* schedule, the series of *dharnas* and hunger strikes were in progress at various places from 20th to 23rd July. One such big *dharna* was organised in the Parade ground of Jammu on 23rd July which was also attended by Kuldeep Dogra. He recited his poem - *Jago tumko Hindu ki jageer ki raksha karni hai* (Wake up, you have to protect Hindu legacy). After this poem he delivered a brief speech - "It is important to spread this movement, for getting the land of Bhole *Baba* back, to the farthest village of the region. To achieve this avowed objective, some young man has to sacrifice his life. Sacrificing my life I call upon the nationalist forces of the country to join this struggle unitedly". Soon after uttering these words Kuldeep Dogra fell down and collapsed. This young man had already consumed poison before addressing the gathering.

Martyr Sanjeev Singh

On the 4th August, in Samba, the SSP himself opened fire on the agitating demonstrators which took the life of one Sanjeev Singh, 42. According to some eye witnesses, no warning was given to the people before firing. Rather SSP indicated and called the people to come closer and when they did so they were shot.

Martyr Sunny Padha

On the 4th August itself, when the SSP fired upon the demonstrators, another youngman and a college student, Sunny Padha was shot. The only son of his parents, he fought for justice and became a martyr.

Martyr Narendra Sharma

Narendra Sharma, a resident of Kathua made memorable contribution to this holy movement by sacrificing his life. Engaged in the business of spare parts in Chadwal area of Kathua he was

leading a group of young demonstrators on the 6th August. They were blocking the movement of trucks moving to Kashmir. Thousands of people were sitting on *dharna* on the highway. The police started *lathi-charge* without warning and when the people did not move, they opened fire targetting Narendra Sharma which killed him on the spot.

Martyr Dr. Balwant Khajuria

Dr. Balwant Khajuria, 70, an *Ayurvedacharya* (Retd.) belonged to an affluent family of Hiranagar. For several days, he continued providing leadership and direction to the demonstrators in Hiranagar. One day, during *dharna*, suddenly he requested for a glass of water and swallowed a pill of poison. He seems to have already made up his mind for the extreme step. Just before that, he had made a donation of Rs 1,000/- to the *Sangharsha Samiti*. Dr Khajuria mentioned in his last letter that he was sacrificing his life to inspire the people to continue the fight till the end and to awaken the anti-Jammu government to come to its senses.

Martyr Bodhraj

On the 18th August, Bodhraj, a resident of Kotli Makhi was driving down to a nearby town R.S. Pura to join the agitation with Indian Tricolor fluttering on his motorcycle. The police tried to stop him. When he did not, a police officer on his bike chased him and after some distance knocked him down. He got serious head injury which proved fatal. He was a modest farmer.

Martyr Deepak Sharma

In response to a call given by *Sangharsha Samiti* on the 18th, 19th and 20th August, the *Jail Bharo* Movement had reached far and wide in the region. On 20th August, Deepak Sharma, a resident of village Riyal and his friends were on their way to Bishnah near Jammu shouting slogans, to join the agitation, with the Tricolour fluttering atop their tractor. When their tractor reached a turn, the police tried to stop them. When the driver suddenly applied brakes

to stop the speeding vehicle, the trolley toppled. This left Deepak Sharma and his friends seriously wounded. He later breathed his last in the hospital.

The Jammu & Kashmir police treated the bodies of these martyrs in the most indignant manner but the public, giving them the honour of 'Immortal martyr', performed their last rites in accordance with the Hindu rituals. Wrapped in the national Tricolor their bodies were kept on the pyre in the presence of thousands of people comprising men, women, young and the old. Lakhs of people attended their homage prayer meetings.

Abominable Police Action - Atrocities in Samba

The massive campaign which had engulfed the entire Jammu region was reaching its peak. On the 7th August, thousands of enthusiasts took out a massive procession in Samba. The slogans of "*Har Har Mahadev*" ranted the air. People assembled in large numbers and staged '*dharna*' near the police station in the heart of the city. After *dharna*, the procession moved on peacefully. The police obstructed their way and even resorted to firing to detour the peaceful procession which injured 50 people out of which 6 were seriously wounded. They were taken to Medical College, Jammu by the *Sangharsha Samiti* volunteers. Among the demonstrators, were two young men from Samba, Jugal Kishore and Sunil Singh who succumbed to the injuries sustained in police firing.

Pawan Kumar loses Eyes

Around noon on 5th August, the meeting of *Sangharsha Samiti* was in progress in a temple in Jorian. All of a sudden, the police arrived at the site and resorted to lathi charge. As this news spread, people in large number reached the spot raising slogans. Police started firing indiscriminately and without provocation which left 22 people seriously injured. In this brutal police firing, one 30 year old Pawan kumar lost both his eyes. Agitated by this inhuman act,

a group of about 150 women attacked the police party, some of them were thrashed and made to run for cover.

Hindu leaders' Visit Banned

In the first week of August, with a view to assess the fast deteriorating situation of Jammu, Sadhvi Ritambhara and Uma Bharati visited Jammu, but as soon as they landed at the airport both of them were taken away by the police and were detained in a room at the Airport. Sadhvi Ritambhara was to attend a public meeting at 4.00 P.M. in the Parade Ground. Both the *Sadhvis* were ordered to return to Delhi but they staged a *dharna* at the airport against this unlawful order of the government. Sadhvi Ritambhara was forcibly flown to Delhi while Uma Bharati was put under house arrest in the government guest house at Udhampur. As the news of this high-handedness spread, thousands of people proceeded to Udhampur Guest house. Uma Bharati courageously broke free from the police confinement and addressed the gathering for half an hour. Next day, she, too, was flown to Delhi. Equally despicable treatment was in store for BJP Chief, Rajnath Singh and General Secretary, Arun Jaitley when they visited Jammu, but the huge gathering of the people thwarted the designs of the state authorities.

The Fire of Separatism

During the nationalist movement, the Kashmiri separatists tried to instigate people in the Muslim-dominated areas against the Hindus to flare up communal riots. The government machinery, especially the pro-Pakistan elements in the police force, openly supported the miscreants. The entire area of Poonch faced a real threat of Hindu exodus. In 1989, similar circumstances were created and three lakh Hindus were forced to flee from their homes.

Poonch District in the Jammu region is very close to Kashmir and Pakistani territory where Hindu population based near the line of control is only 10 percent. Adjacent to this area, the Rajouri

District too has minimal Hindu population of 18 percent. As the Jammu region witnessed the rise of Amarnath land movement, the separatist outfits like Lashkar-e-Taiba and Hizbul Mujahideen started threatening the Hindus to leave the region. On the 23rd August, about 4,000 Kashmiri and Muslim extremists gathered at Parade Ground in Poonch. They entered the city and vandalised scores of shops of Hindus and caused heavy damage to their houses in the very presence of the police force. As a defensive measure, when the Hindus united to face up to the Muslim goondaism, the police resorted to lathi charge, tear gas and even indiscriminate firing. The curfew was imposed in the city to muzzle the voice of Hindus. The same night, some Muslim youth violated the curfew and pelted stones at the Hindu temples and houses. Same disgraceful acts were repeated in Rajouri District. The vital information and leads provided by the Hindu leaders to the security forces and police officials about the planned attacks of Muslims had little impact.

Jihad against Hindus

There is no exaggeration to say that in the very presence and with full support of J&K police and under well planned conspiracy of Kashmiri separatist groups, the Muslim majority of a number of districts launched '*Jihad*' against the Hindu minority. It continued for 2 days; Muslim miscreants freely went about burning and rampaging the Hindus' homes, shops and places of worship with impunity. Even women and children did not escape the brazen attacks of Muslims. The general apathy and indifferent attitude of administration was, as usual, deplorable. The police personnel shut their eyes and even switched off their mobiles.

In Kathua, Samba, Riyasi and Doda districts of Jammu region also, the separatist Muslims tried their utmost to create communal strife. It is worthwhile to mention that the wonderful Hindu-Muslim harmony generated in support of the movement and Shri Amarnath

pilgrims in Jammu region did not find favour with the separatists. The anti-national elements who had sneaked into the state administration did everything to vitiate the environment.

There was concrete evidence on record to reveal the unholy collusion between the police personnel and Kashmiri miscreants, so much so that a number of police constables in plain clothes were seen indulging in arson and looting of Hindus. In Bhatyas village of Gandoh Tehsil in Doda District two Hindu temples were burnt down. The traitorous activities of the Kashmiri separatists continued unabated in the Muslim dominated areas in the Jammu region.

Nationalists vs. Separatists

The movement launched by *Shri Amarnath Sangharsha Samiti* associated with the Indian nation and Hindu honour divided the state into two parts-Jammu and Kashmir. On the one side were the patriotic people of Jammu fighting for honour while on the other, the traitors were seen holding the Pakistani flag. The Union government either failed to understand the conflicting streak between the nationalists and the separatists or aware of the entire situation, deliberately and purposefully adopted the policy of 'watching from the fence and serving its own political interests' and hoodwinking the public about its concern to find out the solution.

Surprisingly, except Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP), all the parties, more or less, were silent over the entire issue. The raging fire of separatism and sedition is engulfing one part of the country, the Pakistani flags are being unfurled unashamedly and the governments, both central and state, are lacking the political resolve to crush anti-nationalism and subversion with firmness. Exploiting this weakness of our governments, Pakistan, resorting to the frivolous and oft-repeated charges of 'atrocities against Kashmiris', is constantly raising the issue at the international forum. The chasm

between the two regions viz. Jammu and Kashmir and their ideological and characteristic basis, can be easily understood by seeing the manner in which people of the two regions held demonstrations on the 14th and 15th August. In both the regions, the Republic Day functions organised by the government were boycotted. On the 14th August, Pakistan Day was celebrated in all the cities of Kashmir valley. The Kashmiri leaders openly declared—“India is not our country. India has enslaved Kashmir. We are fighting for freedom.” Accordingly, 15th August, the Independence Day was mourned as a ‘Black Day’ in Kashmir.

In Jammu region too, there was complete boycott of Government-held Republic Day functions. But, to a call given by the *Sangharsha Samiti*, people organised Republic day functions in the villages, towns and cities throughout the state. Reportedly, reverential salute was given to the Indian Tricolor at 1800 places in the districts of Jammu, Kathua, Samba, Udhampur, Riyasi, Rajouri, Poonch, Bhadrawah, Kishtwar and Doda. Raising slogans of ‘*Bharat Mata ki Jai*’ devotional *Aartis* (Prayers) were performed and school children recited patriotic songs. At various places people took out processions carrying pictures of Shri Rama, Krishna, Shiva and Ma Durga. All these festivities filled the atmosphere with gaiety and love. Similarly, on the 16th August, on the occasion of *Raksha Bandhan*, lakhs of people tied *Raksha Sutra* on each other’s wrist and took a solemn pledge to fight, to the last breath, in this holy struggle. People of all castes, sects, faiths and areas joined this unique struggle waged for saving Hindu honour.

Nation-wide *Jail bharo* Movement

With a view to spread the message of this mass movement *Jail bharo* campaign was launched across the nation from 18th to 20th August under the banner of the *Sangharsha Samiti* in which lakhs of people courted arrest. A large number of saints and sages

resolved to make this holy movement reach far and wide across the country. On the first day of the campaign, over three lakh people held demonstrations and courted arrests at various police stations in the Jammu region. Such arrests crossed 4 lakh-mark on the second day which included 80% women. On the third day of the campaign, about 2.5 lakh children and elderly people courted arrests. The grandparents accompanied by their grandchildren and great grandchildren went to jails. At places like Sundarbani, Rajouri, Samba, Bilawar, Dhagwal, Akhnoor, Timarpur, Doda, Bhadrawah and Kishtwar, seeing the vast sea of people converging, the policemen and their officers got panicky and leaving their *thanas* ran away for safety. The processionists hoisted Tricolors atop the police stations. The women agitators, sarcastically and challengingly, removed their bangles and left them in the *thanas*. Sensing massive turnout of people on the last day of the campaign, the government developed cold feet and imposed curfew on the night of 19th itself in the areas of Jammu, Rajouri, Poonch, Kathua, Bhadrawah and Kishtwar. The curfew had little impact as lakhs of people took out procession and surrounded the police stations in the region. Regrettably, no government envoy came out to hold talks with the leaders of the movement to assuage the feelings of the aggrieved people. But on the other hand, a 3-member delegation led by the Defence Secretary in the union government and Shri Narayanan, the National Security Advisor arrived in Srinagar for holding talks with the separatist leaders of Kashmir.

Union Government's Policy of Discrimination

In order to solve the complex problem which was of their own making, the Union government again knelt before the separatist forces. The Congress party still believed that by playing with the Hindus' sentiments and faith the Muslims could be won over.

Nothing highlights the Union government's policy of

discrimination more glaringly than the fact that even a small incident in Kashmir is enough to trigger up things at the centre with generous show of concern and urgency about the safety of Kashmiris and ensuring better infrastructure and supply of basic amenities and provisions at the government's expense. All this is ample evidence of the fact that this government surrenders in the most abject manner, before those traitors of the country, who tear and burn Indian Tricolour, those who overtly support Pakistan by unfurling Pakistani flags. But ironically, the on-going 2-month long agitation and complete 'Bandh' in Jammu, sacrifice of 9 precious human lives, people undergoing tremendous torture in the face of batons and bullets had little value in the eyes of the Central government. The patriotic people of Jammu were keeping alive the struggle for their social and religious rights by braving the stress and strain of continuous curfew clamped on them by remorseless authorities which forced them to go without food or water for days together. In its designs, government had well-planned strategies like keeping the cauldron boiling, prolonged closure of important offices, hospitals, banks and business establishments till the peoples' patience and perseverance wore out. The government's intentions were amply clear in its policy of wearing out the agitators' resolve, appeasing Kashmiri separatists, not returning the Shrine Board land and patting its agent and Governor N.N. Vohra. All this was intended to shake peoples' faith and conviction and dent their mental strength and will power.

All Party Committee – Bent upon Appeasement

The struggle of the people of Jammu, sustained for more than 40 days relentlessly had, at last, shaken the government out of its slumber and eventually it came to somewhat realize the indignation of Hindus. An all-party committee under the chairmanship of Home Minister Shiv Raj Patil proceeded to Jammu on the 9th August to deliberate with the *Sangharsha Samiti*.

The people of Jammu greeted the all-party Committee with black flags and badges to show their deep anguish and resentment. Thousands of people comprising women, children, old and young made a human chain all the way from airport to Raj Bhawan making a rubbish of curfew and heavy police blockade on the way, but the administration thwarted the protestors' move on the strength of its heavy force and escorted them to Raj Bhawan via Satwari Cantonment route.

Even on this day, the state administration gave free hand to the security forces and the police to deal with innocent people in the harshest possible manner. Jammu city looked like a cantonment. All the main roads and streets were sealed with barbed wires. The media passes were torn and thrown away. Several journalists were assaulted and beaten. There was no relaxation in the curfew throughout the day. Defying police highhandedness the valiant people of *Sangharsha Samiti* took out a protest march under great personal risk. People came out on the streets in the face of tear gas, batons and bullets of the police. Meanwhile, a 24-member delegation of the *Sangharsha Samiti* led by Shri Leela Karan Sharma agreed to talk to the All-Party Committee. But when they came to know that the committee also comprised people like the Governor N.N. Vohra, PDP Chief Mahbooba Mufti, National Conference supremo, Dr. Farukh Abdullah, ex-CM Gulam Nabi Azad and Union Minister Saifuddin Soz, they decided to boycott the meeting. The *Samiti* also expressed that they were not agreeable to the dialogue taking place at Governor's official residence.

In view of the sensitive situation, Home Minister Patil acceded to the two demands. The above-mentioned leaders were asked to keep away from the dialogue process. The meeting started at 4.30 P.M. between the All party committee and *Sangharsha Samiti*. At the outset, Home Minister advised the *Samiti* to withdraw the

agitation which was rejected outrightly. Thus the meeting ended without any outcome. At 7.50 in the evening, the delegation left for Srinagar. The disgraceful part of the entire political drama was that the Home Minister made no reference to the highly sensitive and stressful situation in Jammu, the highhandedness of the police, the hardship and agony faced by the people of curfew-ridden region and shamefully, not a word was spoken about those who lost their lives in police firing or were seriously injured.

Politics of Opportunism

What was to follow was even more bizarre and deplorable. The Home Minister who had no time and word to assuage the bruised feelings of the people of Jammu crossed all limits of political opportunism, human impropriety and sycophancy when he met Kashmiri leaders. On meeting the Kashmiri leaders he opened his *pitara* (box) of doles. Bold promises were made to compensate the Kashmiri Muslims and fruit growers for the losses sustained by them due to the agitation. He assured full armed protection to the trucks belonging to Kashmiris on the Pathankot-Jammu-Srinagar national highway. He even assured that security arrangement for Kashmiri people will be further strengthened. Adding insult to the injury of the Hindus of Jammu, he assured the Kashmiri separatists that affected Muslims of Jammu region will also be compensated and taken care of by the administration. The Home Minister probably forgot that he was Home Minister of India and not Muslims alone.

Despite the Union government and Home Minister, in particular, stooping and succumbing to the unjust and unfair demands of the Kashmiri leaders, the separatist organisations continued to harp on their campaign of "*Muzaffrabad chalo*". In this move, the Kashmiri leaders' ploy of marching to Muzaffrabad accompanying the trucks carrying fruits and vegetables was a political intrigue to internationalise the Kashmir issue. The warm

welcome given to the people crossing the border and reaching Muzaffrabad in Pakistan was a flagrant intervention in the internal affairs of India by the Government of Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK). This action seen in the backdrop of the provocative addresses made by Kashmiri separatist leaders, constitute serious offences under the rule of law. The questions arise – Why does the Government lack courage and strategy to deal with the forces of separatism who commit all kinds of anti-national acts and go unpunished? Why are such serious offences of treason and sedition not put under trial? Why does the Government develop cold feet in dealing with the terrorist outfits and separatist elements? Why didn't the government lodge its protest with Pakistan when the Prime Minister of PoK made elaborate arrangement of food and medicines for the Muslims crossing over to Pakistan? Pakistan's indulgence in inciting people of one of our States for crossing the border is gross violation of the international laws. One thing is clear in this context that the government lacks the guts and gumption to deal with the separatist elements with the requisite resolve and firmness. It, undoubtedly, proves that it is more concerned about its Muslim vote bank rather than national unity and security of the people and that it does not want to annoy the separatists at any cost.

Spirits High in the face of Tremendous Hardships

The manner in which the people of Jammu continued the struggle for 2 months to protect their religion and faith, braving the worst circumstances shall always serve as a source of inspiration for the generations to come. This movement brought all economic activities to a halt. Institutions, offices, banks and business houses wore a deserted look. Even small wage earners and the labour class accepted economic loss and hardships for the sake of their faith. They faced tremendous hardship- mental, physical as well as financial but never got disheartened and despite

heavy odds carried on their struggle with renewed strength and energy. The shouts of slogans of *Har Har Mahadev*, *Har Har Bhole* kept their spirits high in every street and chowk. As per an economist, during the movement the people of Jammu suffered a total revenue loss of about Rs. 26,000 crore. The lower middle class and people who survived on daily wages were the worst affected.

To cite a few examples of the people who bore the brunt during the agitation – one Soma Devi, a florist near Ranvireshwar temple, had 3 children to feed. Her husband was a rickshaw puller. Her family was in great financial straits. She got help from the people living nearby. Her family did not lose heart and stood solidly behind the movement. They had the resolve to fight to the last. In another case, a handicapped beggar on Residency Road made a contribution of Rs. 51/- to a *Sangharsha Samiti* volunteer urging him to carry on the movement and assuring his support expressed his deep emotions and hope that the devotees of Lord Shiva will ultimately prevail and His enemies will be defeated.

Arrangement of 'Langars' (Community kitchens)

The people of Jammu not only participated in the movement they also set an example of social harmony and unity by organizing *langars* at various places to feed the needy and poor people and provided them the essential items of daily use. During the curfew, the police and security forces put up barbed wires and barricades in the streets, roads and crossings in the entire city and confined the people in their homes. But still people organised small *langars* to feed the poor and helpless people. Even policemen and *jawans* of paramilitary forces' who had used *lathis* and bullets on the innocent people, had their meals in these *langars*.

There was no dearth of food and essential items in these '*langars*', which were organised in large number to mitigate the

hardship of the agitating people. Generous contributions were made by the people for proper management of *langars*. In these *langars*, people from all walks of life participated – women, children, young and old – all of them contributed immensely and voluntarily. Even the officers of the security forces were surprised to see the functioning of these *langars*. *Sangharsha Samiti* allowed the hospitals and chemists to carry on their work. Though people who were indisposed and ill could not move out due to curfew restrictions, workers and volunteers of VHP, Sewa Bharati and RSS visited such people in their homes to know about their well-being and provided them medicines and other necessities. Arrangements were also made by these '*karyakartas*' and *swayamsevak*s to shift seriously ill people to nearby hospitals and dispensaries.

At some places, Muslim brethren gave flour and other edibles in ample measure. Even labourers and *Rehriwallas* made their contribution in these *langars*. As per an estimate, lakhs of people had their food in about 250 *langars*. These *langars* wore a divine look and were always exhorting and inspiring people to move ahead in their mission with utmost dedication and resoluteness. The firm and formidable faith which the people had in Lord Shiva and Baba Amarnath inspired them and gave them the requisite stoicism to face the atrocities inflicted by the administration for 2 months.

The Government finally bows

In the three meetings that took place between the government and the representatives of the *Samiti*, the former tried to blackmail the latter. The government tried to impose conditions under which the *Samiti* either withdraws the agitation or the agitation loses its strength due to internal rift or under administrative pressure. But the *Sangharsha Samiti* thwarted the malafide designs of the government.

The mounting impact and intensity of the mass movement and

rapid expansion of its base from Jammu to other parts of the country forced both the State and the Central governments to think in terms of acceding to the *Samiti's* demands. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh summoned the J&K Governor and other top ranking officers to Delhi and directed them to accede to the demands of the *Sangharsha Samiti*.

The entire *Hindu Samaj* of the country including the people of Jammu had to fight relentlessly for 63 days to retrieve the land measuring just 100 acres in Kashmir for the convenience of *Shri Amarnath* pilgrims and devotees on a temporary basis. But after all the hardships and sacrifices, the Hindu unity and self-respect emerged triumphant.

After series of failures of talks between the government panels and *Sangharsha Samiti*, the two sides finally reached an historic agreement on the 31st August. The government which let loose a reign of terror upon the people at last acceded to all the demands of the *Samiti*. The government panel consisted of S/Shri Amitabh Mattoo, Vice Chancellor, University of J&K, Justice G.D. Sharma and B.B. Vyas with Shri S.S. Bitoria, Chief Secretary as the Chairman. The core team of *Sangharsha Samiti* under the chairmanship of Shri Tilak Raj Sharma, Advocate, comprised Brig.(Retd.) Suchet Singh, Narendra Singh and ex-Tehsildar, Shri Pawan Kohli.

There was detailed discussion on various aspects of the issue for three hours in the government guest house. Both the parties gave proposals, counter proposals and response of the panel was found to be positive and reasonable. After some initial reluctance and reservation, a consensus was reached at 4.30 A.M. and the historic agreement was signed.

***Karyakartas* join the Movement selflessly**

Soon after the formation of *Shri Amarnath Yatra Sangharsha Samiti*, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) extended their total

support to ensure success of the movement. All the affiliated bodies of Sangh including Vishwa Hindu Parishad came out in full strength to support the movement. As these nationalist, honest and non-political leaders and *karyakartas* swung into action, it not only strengthened the *Sangharsha Samiti* but also motivated various religious and social organizations to join hands with the *Samiti*.

At the first meeting of the *Sangharsha Samiti* held in Geeta Bhawan in Jammu on the 29th June, all the wings and organisations of the RSS alongwith representatives of 32 Hindu organizations participated. Among the dignitaries who were present at this meeting were – Convener of the *Sangharsha Samiti*, Advocate Leela Karan Sharma, VHP leader Dr. Rama Kant Dube and Chief Mahant of Radha Krishna Temple, Swami Dinesh Bharati. In this very meeting, it was decided to constitute *Sangharsha Samitis* at every district, taluka and village level.

Committees formed upto the Village level

The leaders and volunteers of *Shri Amarnath Yatra Sangharsha Samiti* initiated efforts at the village level. About 1300 *Sangharsha Samitis* were formed within a week. In every village, town and city, the people of all sects and religions offered to join this movement voluntarily and take up the challenge of making it a people's movement.

After constitution of the committees at the village level, the Provincial *Sangharsha Samithi* formed a core group, which had 35 members including Shri Leela Karan Sharma as Chairman. The Provincial *Sangharsha Samiti* had its office in Geeta Bhawan in Jammu where meetings and Press conferences at regular intervals took place. Likewise, the Core group met every evening at a particular place, where progress of the movement was discussed and future course of action deliberated. The decisions taken at the meeting of the Core group were discussed next morning at the meeting of the Provincial *Sangharsha Samiti*. Teams of volunteers

in the Jammu region were formed to convey the decision of Provincial *Sangharsha Samiti* to the *Samitis* at every village, taluka and town level. Besides, volunteers (*Swayamsevak*s) of RSS and various Hindu organizations were also included in the team. These young volunteers worked very painstakingly round the clock to convey the progress and future strategy.

In this regard, the amount of work accomplished by Trikuta Samvad Kendra can not be ignored. This Kendra played its role superbly and working from 9 A.M. to 10 P.M. contributed immensely to the success of this movement. The activities undertaken by the Samvad Kendra included - preparation of press reports, despatch of programs of the movement to various newspapers, sending briefs of progress of the movement to various Samvad Kendras and compilation of newspaper clippings. It also did excellent work in preparing website and blogs and made the ideological material available to the leaders and volunteers of *Sangharsha Samiti*. A CD on the book – '*Aastha Par Aaghat*' was prepared and sent to all the leading publishers in the country. That is how lakhs of copies printed from various publishing centres reached the prominent people. The narration of background, activities and objectives printed in this book facilitated the task of the *Sangharsha Samiti*.

People joined and the Convoy moved

People joined the movement in ever-increasing number and worked untiringly day in and day out to strengthen the movement. As the movement expanded, the responsibilities of the *Sangharsha Samitis* also increased. In the entire Jammu region, groups of Hindu youth prepared themselves to work ceaselessly following every directive of the *Samiti* and take the movement forward successfully to its goal.

It is true that in this people's movement people participated in the name of '*Hindutva*' and '*Bum Bum Bhole*'. Lakhs of men

and women along with children enthusiastically joined '*Jail Bharo*' programmes and ensured success of the movement. They contributed money for the *langars*, made Tricolors in their homes and plunged into the agitation. One can not ignore the limitless strength of the *Hindutva*, which created the patriotic environment and kept people's morale high.

The volunteers who contributed their all – money, body and soul, faced all kinds of obstacles falling in the way of the movement for 2 months with fortitude. Their acts were not driven by the mundane desires of position, power and status. The movement proceeded on its path consistently on the strength of the untiring effort and hard work of these volunteers. They ensured the success of *dharnas*, demonstrations, *Bandhs*, *Prabhat Pheris*, *Jail Bharo* programmes and various other activities undertaken during the movement. They dealt with innumerable other issues like arrangement of *langars*, court cases of the arrested agitators, engaging lawyers etc. All such activities could be undertaken only with the active support and cooperation of thousands of RSS volunteers. They accomplished the tasks with their self-less zeal and spirit of sacrifice.

The success achieved by the movement of *Shri Amarnath Yatra Sangharsha Samiti* for protecting the Hindu faith and national self-respect is the triumph of *Hindutva* and the like-minded nationalist forces over pro-Pakistan, anti-national and secessionist groups. The patriotic people of Jammu continued their fight for two months facing endless agony and pain. Through their commitment and resolve they showed the path to all the nationalist people across the country.

The people of Jammu, through their well organised action, have given a message to the entire country that only a unified people's force, with no political trappings can thwart the designs of anti-national forces and separatists. This is the first time in 63 years that

government had to yield to the genuine and legitimate demands of the Hindus. In the past, government had never budged on any issue concerning Hindus' pride and faith, viz. Go Raksha Abhiyan (Save Cow movement), Hindu Civil Code, protection of places of worship, Shah Bano case, *Shri Ram Janambhumi* issue and similar issues of Hindu identity. Significantly, at the time of *Shri Ram Janambhumi* movement, the Union government had allowed the laying of foundation stone of the temple and in the case of *Shri Ramsetu Raksha* issue, the government which initially negated the very existence of Shri Rama had later sheepishly altered its own affidavit in the Supreme Court. But, in the past, every national movement concerning Hindus was severely opposed. All the successive Congress governments, since independence, indulged in shameful vote-bank politics based on Muslim appeasement and leaving aside national interests, always tried to browbeat the nationalist forces. Depriving the people of Jammu of their constitutional rights and conceding privileges to the Muslim-dominated Kashmir, rather purposely, is the snapshot of the Congress regime. The people of Jammu have indeed succeeded both in terms of forcing the issue in question and also in showing the Congress government the way issues of Hindu sentiments and faith ought to be addressed.

The saga of this movement has conveyed a very significant message for the people of this country. That is, if Hindus of a small region like Jammu can, with the co-operation and support of their Muslim, Sikh and Christian brethren, challenging the separatist elements, force the government to accede to their legitimate demands, then all the patriotic people of this country, unitedly, can thwart the designs of the anti-national elements who are conspiring to destroy this nation following the dictates from anti-India forces like ISI. The patriotic people of Jammu, with their

undaunted spirit of sacrifice have proved that if the Hindu Samaj of this country, which constitutes 85% of the entire population, stands united, they will defeat the pseudo secularists who are out to belittle the Hindu honour and faith. The united strength of the people of Jammu has also proved that it is only Hindutva which can provide the nation a firm foundation and platform on which the whole nation can proudly hold its head high with honour and protect the national culture, sovereignty, unity and symbols of our social cohesion.



***Kashmiriat* devoid of *Hindutva*?**

The current issue of Shri Amarnath Shrine Board has completely exposed the Kashmiri leaders' deep-rooted anti-Hindu feelings and acrimonious attitude towards India. The Kashmiri leaders, who are the descendants of the Hindu ancestors, have proved, by raising the slogan of independent Kashmiri nation, that they have nothing to do with their illustrious ancestors, their magnificence and indefatigable Kashmiriat. These extremist leaders are more concerned about the legacy of the atrocious aggressors and are out to destroy the great cultural traditions of their forefathers. This is the reason why these Kashmiri leaders were unwilling to give 100 acres of land in Kashmir to the 100 crore Hindus.

Unfortunately and unwisely, the fanatic leaders like Geelani, Mufti, Farukh, Shabir Shah and Yasin Malik have come to believe that '*Jihad*' and '*Kashmiriat*' meant destruction and desecration of *math*, *mandir*, places of Hindu faith and large scale violence. Why do they ignore the fact that merely five hundred years ago, all Kashmiris were Hindus. Kashmir, the pride of *Bharat Mata* presented to the world various faiths such as *Naag puja*, Shaivism, Buddhism, Vaishnavism etc. so essential for the welfare of mankind.

The great Hindu Kings and Emperors like Lalitaditya, Avantivarman, Harsh, Meghvahan, Durlabhvahan and Chandrapada brought world acclaim to Kashmiriat. The various branches of human knowledge like Mathematics, Ayurveda, Science, Statistics and Philosophy originated and developed in the land of Kashmir, reached out to the entire world. When Indian borders touched Mid-Asia, India was ruled by the Emperor Lalitaditya who was a Kashmiri Hindu. Though, in the present era, the descendants (converted Muslims) of Lalitaditya and Chandrapada, are out to destroy the true and glorious spirit of Kashmir, yet it is absolutely true that Kashmiriat is part of the Hindu culture. With a view to destroy the cultural heritage of Kashmir in collusion with the foreign aggressors, the terrorists and separatists who are shedding human blood, themselves have the blood of these Hindu ancestors in their veins. Rather unwisely, for them, *Jihad* and *Kashmiriat* meant destruction of the *Maths*, temples, centres of culture and educational institutions, which, in fact, were built by their own ancestors.

There has never been any conflict, whatsoever, among the followers of various forms of faith and worship which were born on Kashmiri soil viz. Shaivism, Nag puja, Vaishnav and Buddhism. All these faiths, their torch bearers and followers became inseparable part of India and Indian nationalism. Even the foreign rulers like Kanishka and Mihirkul belonging to *Kushaan* and *Hun* races accepted Shaivism and Buddhism respectively and accepting the Indian ethos, merged into the national mainstream. But when Islam came to Kashmir, began an era of conflict, separatism, forced conversions, suppression and fanaticism. Ushering a mindset of gross intolerance towards other creeds and people, it brought about the culture of *Jihad* and bloodshed. This is the tragedy of Kashmir. The current furore of 'Separate Kashmiri Nation' is part of the legacy of the age-old intolerance, insensitivity and fundamentalism as the Islam does not allow its followers to assimilate into the

mainstream of any nation. It basically propagates a flawed notion that any part of the land with Muslim majority must become an Islamic state. Pakistan is the product of that deep-rooted ideology. Kashmir is following the same trend. During the last 500 years, Hindus have gone through one of the worst and cruel phases of human history at the hands of the Muslim rulers who forced them to accept Islam. The recent mass exodus of Kashmiri Hindus from Kashmir is the latest version of that intolerance and fanaticism which has no respect and consideration for non-Muslims.

The leaders who were peeved during the Shri Amarnath land movement harboured, rather naively, ill-conceived fears like Kashmir being turned into a Hindu colony, imbalance in Muslim population and prospect of Hindus settling in Kashmir. They must be asked as to who turned the 500 year old Hindu Kashmir into a Muslim colony and who supported and joined hands with the foreign invaders in their vicious designs? They must be asked as to who decimated the world-famous Sun temple like Martund Temple and thousands of worship places of Hindu faith, the great Sanskrit scriptures preaching welfare of mankind, libraries, eminent institutions of science and spirituality?

The process of converting Kashmir, ruled by the foreign invaders, Syeds of Hamdan, Moghuls and Afghans in the past, into an Islamic nation, completely devoid of Hindus, still continues. In fact, the speech delivered by Sheikh Abdullah at the Lal Chowk in Srinagar, immediately after assuming power subsequent to accession of Kashmir by Maharaja Hari Singh at the time of partition, laid the foundation of the present mindset of separate Kashmiri Nation. During that speech, he kept on instigating and whipping up passions among the simple-natured Kashmiri people. In his words, "We have lifted the crown of Kashmir from the ashes. Whether we merge with India or Pakistan is the issue to be considered later. First, we must achieve complete freedom for

ourselves." It is quite clear that Shekh Abdullah was instigating the majority community of the valley in the name of Islam to wage Jung-e-Azadi (war for freedom). Regrettably, in the last 63 years all the political parties which came to power in the state of Jammu & Kashmir, lent support to the forces of separatism. The Kashmiri youth who have taken up arms and are hell bent on destroying the Kashmiriat of their forefathers, are the products created by these fanatical separatist leaders and *madarsas*.

It is incomprehensible that though Pt. Nehru somewhat redeemed the various blunders he committed in Kashmir affairs by putting Sheikh behind the bars, but no action was taken against those who kept promoting anti-nationalism and sedition for the last six decades, including leaders of Huriyat Conference, National Conference, PDP and Congress. On the contrary, the atmosphere was further vitiated by formulating policies based on the politics of appeasement. The government, by first making allotment of land to the Shrine Board and then reversing its own decision under pressure, not only highlights its abject surrender to the flag-bearers of Kashmiri nationalism but it also encouraged these elements to pursue their agenda of fundamentalist Kashmiriat. Otherwise, the forces of separatism harping on the 'independent Kashmiri state' within the Indian nation, could not have dared to do so.

Why do the people raising chorus of 'independent Kashmiri nation' forget that the nationalism is a cultural ideology and philosophy and not a political doctrine. The faith and culture on which '*Kashmiriat*' is supposed to be based and which are being confused with 'nationality' was not borne on the Kashmiri soil. None of the propagators of this culture was a Kashmiri. This culture happened to arrive in India alongwith the foreign invaders. These invaders went about demolishing the 5,000 year old culture, its guardians and followers and slapped a foreign culture on Kashmir. How strange and shocking it is that Kashmiri Hindus who valiantly

fought the invaders and sacrificed their lives to save and secure the Kashmiri honour had to leave their own land in disgust and desperation. And the people who shamelessly surrendered to those invaders and defaced the true Kashmiriat have come to assume the seats of power and now raising chorus of Kashmiri nation.

It is quite obvious that this foreign culture and faith can neither be *Kashmiriat* nor nationalism. The *Kashmiriat* which has no place for Kashmiri Hindus, no reverence for the great Kashmiri heritage and provides no basis for the 5,000 year old fabulous history of Kashmir can never achieve the status of a national phenomena. The communal-minded frenzy and *Kashmiriat* which the ill-advised Kashmiri leaders believe to be a call for an independant Kashmiri 'nation' is, as a matter of fact, theory of a 'Muslim nation' without the Kashmiri Hindus. The spirit of nationalism can not be inculcated without appreciating the basic culture of a nation. Since time immemorial, India has remained as one nation, one culture and one entity and Kashmir is an inseparable part of that *Bharat Rashtra*. According to the Indian philosophy, a nation is developed and not made, whereas in the Western and Islamic world, it is accepted as a political unit. Therefore, as long as the concept of a 'nation' was recognised as a cultural ideology in Kashmir, the *Kashmiriat* continued to be a part of Indian nationalism. But when the concept of 'nation' came to be characterised in the narrowminded confines of religion, the *Kashmiriat* too became narrowminded and fundamentalist. When the foreign culture and ideology took the reins of power in Kashmir, it brought along '*Nizam-e-mustafa*' i.e. 'Rule of Religion' which ushered in the trend of 'separatism'. This sums up the tragedy of Kashmir.

Therefore, the Kashmiri people especially the youth must act sagaciously, getting rid of the leaders harping on the charade of 'Kashmiri nation', should join the mainstream of *Bharat Rashtra*. This is the only way *Kashmiriat* can be saved and preserved. They

should understand that the blood flowing in their veins is the blood of their Hindu ancestors. Like elsewhere in the country, the ancestors of both, the Kashmiri Hindus and Muslims are common, their history, their culture, their root-everything is common. Therefore, undoubtedly, they have common nationality. If, by following different tenets of religion, different forms of worship and prayer, the commonality of ancestors can not change, then how can the culture, faith and nationality of the ancestors change? The Kashmiri youth must give a serious thought to the fact that only by preserving the Kashmiriat based on the culture of their forefathers can they protect Islamic principles. The seers, sages and holy men, since ancient times, have served the Kashmiriat with their sweat and blood and raising a rebellion against the same blood and holy souls, will prove suicidal and disastrous for Kashmir. The notorious deeds of some misguided and disgruntled Kashmiri youth are bringing disrepute and disgrace to the entire Islamic society across the world.

The indiscreet clamour for a separate nation, the anti-Hindu mindset, violent and irresponsible behaviour of the Kashmiri leaders is itself against the Islamic tenets and norms. In this context it is logical to raise certain questions - If Islam preaches brotherhood and harmony, why this bloodshed? The path of terrorism and violence adopted by the extremists and supported by the separatist leaders will only bring humiliation and embarrassment to the land of Kashmir, Kashmiriat and Islam. It is high time to see through the crooked designs of Pakistan and the fanatic elements. Behaving in a sane and responsible manner, let us not allow the gorgeous and scenic valley of Kashmir to be destroyed. Let us embrace the *Swadeshi Kashmiriat* and bid farewell to the foreign one before it is too late.



Article 370 – The Bone of Contention

Article 370 of the Indian constitution is jeering at the high ideals of secularism, nationalism and union's federal structure repeatedly proclaimed by our governments. In fact, this temporary and specifically appended article for a limited phase, has sown the seeds of an independent Muslim nation in Kashmir, thus continuously fuelling the fire of separatism.

This article which provides a 'different' and 'special' status to the state of Jammu & Kashmir, is a sad and bizarre commentary on our oft-repeated declarations of Kashmir being 'an inseparable part' of the Indian union. This 'special' status of the state ruptures the very bonding between India and Kashmir. It may not be inappropriate to call this unusually different status as 'constitutionally recognised separatism'. It is this 'special feature' which prompts the people of Kashmir, Pakistan and the keen political and diplomatic observers of the world to pose serious questions to the Government of India on Kashmir affairs. It makes one wonder if Kashmir's accession to India is complete like other states and provinces of India. If so, why this policy of special treatment and

appeasement ? Is it because Muslims are in majority in the state? Had there been Hindu majority in the Kashmir valley would this special article still have stayed? If there have been extraordinary circumstances in the valley necessitating special provision who is responsible for this? How long this part- time and interim measure stay as permanent fixture ? Will this article not give reasons for the entire world to cast aspersions on our integrity as a nation ?

It is common knowledge that Maharaja of Jammu & Kashmir, Hari Singh signed the document of 'accession' on October 26, 1947. In line with other states and provinces the state of Jammu & Kashmir was also acceded to the Indian union with the same procedure and provisions. But unfortunately, Pt. Nehru stressed upon the Maharaja to hand over the reins of power of the state to Sheikh Abdullah. Maharaja took this bitter pill and displayed tremendous sagacity and nationalism. At the insistence of Sheikh Abdullah, it was decided, to appease the Kashmiri Muslims, that final view in the matter of accession will be taken by the Legislative assembly of Jammu & Kashmir. This was *ipso facto* grant of separate status to this state distinct from rest of the states in the country. Now the question arose - how to conduct the affairs till decision was taken by the state assembly. To establish a norm for this inter-regnum, Article 370 was appended to the Indian constitution. But when state legislature of Jammu & Kashmir also approved the complete accession of the state with the Indian union in February 1956, article 370 was not repealed. This was an unparalleled and unique case in the world history on political appeasement, betrayal and vote-bank gambit.

Blinded by sheer political egotism, our leaders allowed this interim provision of article 370 to become a lasting phenomena thereby making ourselves an object of ridicule on the world scene. Also, through our conduct, we have created opportunities suited to the schemes of the separatist and subversive elements. What is

grossly reprehensible is that we are not prepared to shed the political avarice; rather it is increasing rapidly with more sinister fall-outs.

Our governments have deliberately masked the serious implications of article 370 and kept the nation in the dark as it will expose the hollowness of their secularism. The dangerous consequences of this article, if brought to light, will uncover the pro-Muslim leanings of the people in power thus leading to their discomfiture.

This article bars the central government from making any law relating to Jammu & Kashmir without the consent of the state government except such matters as defence, foreign affairs and communications. The state government has been fully empowered to challenge and impose its will and thus impede the process of law-making in respect of the subjects mentioned in the Concurrent list and Central list. The Indian Parliament has unlimited and vast powers to formulate laws applicable to all the states in respect of the subjects in the above lists. But in the case of Jammu & Kashmir, Indian government and the Parliament are totally inhibited by the article 370. The most vicious and perilous instance arose when 'Worship Places Bill', passed by the Indian Parliament, the highest governing institution, did not apply to the state of Jammu & Kashmir meaning thereby that the state of Jammu & Kashmir does not fall within the vast periphery of secularism. Though, after Independence, the most heinous crimes of destroying hundreds of temples and worship places of a particular community and unleashing a reign of terror upon them, took place in this state. In the case of *Ram Mandir* at Ayodhya, taking recourse to the bundle of brazen lies and threatening the government of Uttar Pradesh with 'dismissal' under article 356 of the constitution, the then Union Home Minister could not make this law applicable to the state of Jammu & Kashmir.

It may be relevant to mention a few glaring anomalies that the

article 370 has brought in its wake. The Hon. President of India is not entitled to issue any instruction to the state government of Jammu & Kashmir under article 356 nor can he rescind the constitution of the state. Another significant article 352 which equips the union government with powers to declare national emergency can be used in Jammu Kashmit to a very limited extent and article 360 which is about imposition of national emergency on account of economic issues is absolutely unenforceable in the state.

In terms of the provisions laid down in Part-4 of the Indian constitution, there is uniform structure for all the states, for legislative, administrative and economic machinery. But the state of Jammu & Kashmir has the powers, under article 370, to devise its own set-up and structure as per its constitution. As the state has its own flag and emblem, there are two flags unfurling on every state building. The permission to unfurl the national flag has to be obtained from the state government as it is mandatory to unfurl the state flag alongwith the national Tricolor.

The Indian constitution provides for single citizenship for all its subjects but people of Jammu & Kashmir are entitled to twin citizenship granted under the union as well as state constitution. A citizen of Jammu & Kashmir is also the citizen of India, but the citizen of India can not become a citizen of Jammu & Kashmir. The citizen of India i.e. hailing from the rest of India is deprived of the basic human rights - he can neither own property nor has the voting right in the state of Jammu & Kashmir. If a woman from the state marries a man from outside the state (who is not the subject of Jammu & Kashmir) she loses all her rights granted under the constitution. The laws of property framed by the union government are not applicable in this state. As a result, the affluent and rich people in the state who are mainly from the majority community behave highhandedly and exploit the poor sections of the society. The Indian citizens (non-state subjects) residing in this state are

not entitled to avail loan from the Banks and financial institutions.

As the Article 370 encourages political polarisation in the state, no stable government with nationalist character can come to power which can contain the anti-national and subversive elements. The anti-defection law framed by the union government was not accepted by the state government in toto as various changes were carried out in it to suit its political motives and objectives. In this regard, the final authority to decide the cases of defection does not vest in the Chairman of the house i.e. state assembly but it lies with the Head of the concerned political party, lending thereby, the constitutional strength to the autocratic conduct of the Head of the political party. The Governor of Jammu & Kashmir, not being the citizen of the state, and thus without the voting right in the state, is branded as an 'outsider' and an 'agent' by the separatists. The Wazir Commission set up in the eighties had recommended certain political measures relating to Jammu & Kashmir, but the same could not be implemented due to the Article 370.

As a matter of fact, Article 370 imposes too many inhibitions, restrictions and shackles on the Indian government and Indian citizens, unheard and unparalleled anywhere in the world. The burning of national Tricolor is not a crime in the state as the directive principles enshrined in the Indian constitution are not applicable to Jammu & Kashmir, which make it mandatory and ethically obligatory upon the people to extend due reverence to the national symbols, national flag and national anthem. The Indian Parliament can not effect any change, under article 370, in the territorial boundaries of Jammu & Kashmir. The international treaties and agreements signed by the Indian government are applicable throughout the country except the state of Jammu & Kashmir. The Muslims from various parts of the country manage to get the citizenship of the state, but about one lakh Hindus who migrated at the time of partition have not yet been granted the citizenship.

Under the protective cover of this article, the movement of Islamisation set into motion by the fundamentalist leaders in the state has not only gained momentum it has been provided a formidable and lasting support.

Further, Article 370 revives the two-nation doctrine and paves the way for its sustenance in the future. India's behaviour is quite eccentric and weird as on the one hand, we exhibit before the world that there is no discrimination or preference on the basis of religion, caste or creed and on the contrary, we have doled out a special package of favours and facilities in a state which is predominantly inhabited by the Muslim community. If the special favour extended to the state is on account of their economic backwardness, do other parts of the country facing abject and extreme poverty count for nothing? The harsh reality is that billions have been siphoned so far from the exchequer in the name of development of Jammu & Kashmir. The end result is too obvious. The anti-nationals and separatists are up in arms against the Indian nation. What the governments have done- instead of inspiring the Kashmiri people to join the national mainstream, they have pampered them with unlimited and unbridled rights. It raised an element of suspicion in their minds about the accession and gave opportunity to the anti-national forces to indulge in vicious propaganda against India. Pakistan encouraged and supported these subversive organisations. The Kashmiri youth, misled and brainwashed, took up arms and became terrorists. Openly challenging the Indian state, they forced about three lakh patriotic and nationalist Indians abandon their homes, occupations, places of faith and worship to lead a life full of distress and despair.

The Article 370 has lampooned the notion of 'citizenship of India'. The Architect and founder of Indian constitution Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar had warned Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru about this article, "This will pose great difficulty in harmonising the state of Jammu &

Kashmir with India. This article will sow the seeds of separatism among the people of the valley.” The apprehension expressed by Dr. Ambedkar, the great visionary, is coming true in the present circumstances. But the policies of appeasement and vote-bank followed by our leaders are the biggest hurdles in drawing any lessons.

All the above mentioned facts make it amply clear that this sinister article has not ‘joined’ but ‘disjoined’ Kashmir from India. The people of this state, particularly youth, have not assimilated the lofty ideologies of secularism and nationalism into their psyche. Instead they are possessed by the hysteria of three ‘isms’ - regionalism, fundamentalism and separatism. Consequently, they have drifted farther and farther from the national mainstream and now started harping on the bogey of independence.

On April 7, 1958, ‘Kashmir Plebiscite Front’ of Sheikh Abdullah passed a resolution, which reveals how the Kashmiri leaders, on the platform of article 370, have been scheming and plotting to turn Kashmiri people pro-Pakistan and instigating them to rise against the Indian nation. The said resolution reads as under—

‘The state of Jammu & Kashmir has not yet acceded to any of the two dominions - Pakistan and India. Therefore, there is no truth in saying that Pakistani aggression against Jammu & Kashmir be treated as aggression against India.’

The Muslim leaders of Kashmir valley have always opposed on communal and caste lines, the projects and programmes initiated by the government of India in national interest. No plan under the Family Welfare programme of the Indian government is under implementation in the state. Though in Jammu region family welfare plans were implemented as it is a Hindu-majority area. Shri G.M.Shah, ex-CM, Jammu & Kashmir had once commented, ‘The aim of government’s birth control programme is to convert Muslim majority into minority’ Such irrational and absurd statements from

noted political leaders have fostered the separatist elements. The views of Shri Jagmohan, ex-Governor, Jammu & Kashmir, and a noted Author and observer on Kashmir affairs, must serve as a wake-up call for our leaders and thus deserves to be taken note of:-

“The Article 370 alongwith its paraphernalia must be dissolved. It has become a weapon of injustice and inequality. It irrigates the roots of corrupt polity and governance. It nurtures and grooms the narrow-minded and conservative forces. In effect, it accepts, implicitly, the two-nation theory. It feeds the youth with the rubbish of sham and erroneous thinking. It breeds intolerance and prejudiced beliefs. It propagates regional conflicts and tensions.”

It is clear from the historical facts that before the stipulation of Article 370, both the communities, Hindus and Muslims in Jammu & Kashmir, were part of the national mainstream. The relations between the two communities were quite cordial and harmonious and there was no place for acrimony or hostility. In October, 1947 during Pakistani aggression the Kashmiri Muslims not only welcomed the Indian defence forces, they helped them in nabbing the Pakistani infiltrators. Then, why the same Muslim community is viciously attacking the Indian jawans deployed in Kashmir. This is the impact of the venomous article 370. It was due to this menacing character of article 370 which prompted India's Foreign Minister Mohammad Karim Chhagla to state in UNO that the article 370 was temporary and should be scrapped. Two Chief Ministers of Jammu & Kashmir, Sadiq and Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad too wanted to abandon this article. Though the people of the country were promised that the article would be withdrawn in due course, but our leaders' depraved mindset and self-serving interests based on appeasement and vote bank politics did not allow them to do so. Our leaders can withdraw the privy purse of the kings to con

and mislead the people into believing their smokescreen of socialism, equality and pro-poor feelings. But, with their blinkered vision they can not see beyond the interest of their parties and their own. The nation and its integrity does not hold priority for them. Therefore, they would spurn the very idea of abolishing Article 370 which has so far served them as a life-boat in the troubled waters of Indian politics.

In fact, appended for a limited purpose and as part-time transitory mechanism this article has been held as a source of inspiration for converting Kashmir into a Muslim nation. This article has gained strength due to the feeble-minded, power-hungry and self-serving leaders of the ruling parties and ever increasing Islamic fundamentalism. Unless and until the governments which have been the prime beneficiaries of this article are removed from the seat of power and the new order is resolute and visionary enough to weed it out, this article, will prove disastrous for the entire Indian nation. It has, in effect, opened the avenues for subversion, anti-nationalism, separatism and treason. The guiding force behind the Anandpur Sahib Resolution passed by the Akalis emanates from this article. This article is not a constitutional obligation. The privilege and pleasure of 'special status' awarded to the state of Jammu & Kashmir is a serious indignation to the rest of the country. What could be more horrendous and appalling than the fact that anti-India and subversive elements who are out to break up India and establish Islamic order, are basking in the cosy cradle of this article enjoying infinite prerogatives but the people who are patriotic, nationalist and have deep sense of concern and commitment for the nation, face frustration and affront. This article has become the proverbial 'bone wedged in the gullet', hard to swallow and harder not to. But if the bone poses lethal threat to the entire body, it is imperative to eliminate it completely without delay. Similarly, the article 370 which poses grave menace to the integrity and security

of the nation has to be got rid of right away. The need of the hour is to abolish the special status of the state of Jammu & Kashmir which has already caused irredeemable damage to the nation.

Interestingly, there has been a particular faction of political parties which has survived and thrived for decades by playing the communal card and vociferously supporting continuance of Article 370. They have always put forth the argument that it will not be easy to dissolve this article. But according to Dr. Babu Ram Chauhan, a noted scholar and an eminent expert on International Law and Indian Constitution, the article 370 can be annulled without the approval of state assembly of Jammu & Kashmir. It is within the powers of the President of India and Indian Parliament to make this article null and void. The article 3 and 4 of the constitution of Jammu & Kashmir which was framed under the aegis of the Indian constitution, clearly provides, 'The state of Jammu-Kashmir will remain an inseparable part of the Union of India.' It is fairly rational and logical to ask – If the central government can permit the state of Jammu & Kashmir to form its own constitution in the 'interest of the state', why it can not order, in 'national interest', to invalidate it.

For, even otherwise, article 370 has now lost its appropriateness. Why? With the Kashmiri Muslims openly showing a defiant, anti-India and rebellious attitude and even indulging in proxy war against the Indian forces, the aptness of this article is highly suspect. Let us analyse it hypothetically - If an attacker approaches us with murderous intent, will it not be ridiculous if we offer him the option of giving a slap on our face before we settle for an agreement. What use will it serve to continue giving the luxury of the article 370 to people who are fully armed and equipped to wage war for an independent state. Now, when we are passing through an extremely critical phase, when the integrity and security of the nation is in serious jeopardy, we must eliminate all the hurdles

like article 370 and launch a decisive, determined and lethal blow to the forces of subversion and anti-nationalism to eliminate them and do our best to bring the patriotic Kashmiris into the national mainstream. To achieve that, we have to spot and promote nationalist and right leadership from among the Kashmiri youth especially Muslim youth. This righteous mission can be accomplished only through the lanes of patriotism far away from the corridors of perfidious politics, craven attitude and crass indecisiveness. The abolition of article 370 will pave the way for this national initiative – that's for sure !



Indian Security Forces

Equipped with special powers to deal with the insurgency in Kashmir, Indian Security Forces are proving proverbial 'thorn' in the flesh of the separatist elements. The fragile and pathetic policies followed by successive governments and their politics based on Muslim appeasement has made India's position on Kashmir considerably wretched and that of Hindus utterly miserable. With Kashmir fast becoming a 'No-Hindu' zone due to Government's flawed policies, the element of 'inseparability' of Kashmir is intact only because of the presence of our valiant security forces. They pose a real threat to the pro-Pakistan elements and separatists.

In Shopian (Kashmir) the case of rape-cum murder of two local women, Nilofar (22) and Ashia (17) on 29th May, 2009, turned the public sentiments as anti-Indian. As a result, the demand for removal of security forces, army, CRPF etc. alongwith the special powers given to them, gained momentum. The separatist organisations, leaders of terrorist outfits, fundamentalist groups and pro-Pakistan elements in the government—all of them launched a united crusade for total withdrawal of security forces. The Congress-supported ruling National Conference, pro-separatism PDP mounted pressure on the Central government to quash the

'Armed Forces Special Powers Act' and withdraw the Indian security forces.

The Government bows before the Separatists

After having made Kashmir a state fully divested of the Hindus, the conspiracies and manipulations of the separatists for complete withdrawal of the security forces have reached the last phase. Even the Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has made up his mind to yield to the separatists operating in Kashmir with a view to get absolute support of the Muslims.

In view of the peculiar and perilous circumstances obtaining in the state, the Armed Forces' Special Powers Act, 1958 was enforced in Jammu & Kashmir in 1990. The Indian army and CRPF have played a highly commendable and distinguished role since 1989 in fighting terrorism and thwarting the designs of the secessionists. The special powers assigned to the security forces include, inter alia, detention of a person under suspicion, carry out search operation, besiege of an area affected by terrorism, carry out raids on the suspected hide-outs and thorough investigation of the nabbed persons. Such powers are absolutely essential for the security forces to enable them fight the terrorism effectively. It is pertinent to note that there are large number of elements among the local populace who aid and assist the terrorists and provide them safe shelter. Such people make the task of the security forces enormously difficult. It is in these inimical circumstances that the security personnel have to operate. Under the special powers it is also provided that in the event of a security personnel or a *jawan* committing a lapse while discharging his duty, it will be investigated by an officer from the forces and not the civil administration. There are special military courts to deal with the cases involving security personnel.

Besides Jammu & Kashmir, special powers have also been given to the security forces operating in various other terrorist-

affected areas like Manipur, Assam etc. Withdrawal of security forces or curtailing their powers in the areas affected by terrorist violence would be a highly precarious proposition. Pulling out the security forces in a border state like Jammu & Kashmir which is the hotbed of Pak-sponsored terrorism would be an open invitation to the Pakistan-trained armed infiltrators. In fact, people resisting the presence of security forces in Jammu & Kashmir are the ones who are either pro-Pakistan or fundamentalist Muslim leaders harbouring deep aversion for India and the Indians in Jammu & Kashmir.

PDP leader Mehbooba Mufti, ex-Chief Minister Mufti Mohammed Syed, Tehrik-e-Huriyat leader Ali Shah Geelani, Chairman of Huriyat Conference, Mirwaiz Omar Farukh, Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front leader Yasin Malik, leader of Jammu-Kashmir Freedom Party, Shabir Shah are the people who do not want to see Jammu & Kashmir as a part of the Indian union. They always support the pro-Pakistan elements by encouraging strikes, *dharna*, *bandh* etc. throughout the state. They are the people who are responsible for mass evacuation of 4 lakh Hindus from the valley. Resorting to different ploys and gimmicks to vitiate the environment, through violence, murder, rape, arson and then passing on the buck to the Indian security forces, is part of their strategy. Thus, at this critical juncture there are two hurdles in the way of making Kashmir an independent Muslim nation – Indian security forces and their special powers.

Indian Army - Boon for Kashmir

The Union Home Minister Shri P.Chindambram who visited Kashmir to allay the tension arising after the ghastly rape – cum-murder incident at Shopian, added fuel to the fire. He indicated withdrawal of security forces from the interior areas of the valley. Such statements will always encourage the pro-Pakistan elements, demoralise the security forces and humiliate the nationalists. The

Shopian incident has no linkage, whatsoever, with the Indian security forces or CRPF as they have no post around the site of the incident. Though the camp of J&K police is situated nearby. After official investigation, five personnel of Jammu & Kashmir police including an officer have been suspended.

The preliminary investigation report of this incident is mysteriously missing. The corpses of the two young women, victims of rape and murder, were dug out from their grave for another post-mortem. In this post-mortem too, the Jammu & Kashmir policemen were found guilty. When facts of this incident were exposed, the separatists tried to slap another case of abuse and mistreatment of a woman in the police station of Baramullah, on the Indian security forces. Now they tried to project the incident with communal twist and started instigating the Muslims with the result that in Rangrate Banbal area adjoining the police station in Srinagar, the extremists, armed with choppers and spears, attacked about two dozen houses of Hindus and Sikhs and a temple, causing heavy damage and destroying about 40 vehicles. Such violent incidents of communal nature are taking place with annoying regularity as a result of anti-India and anti-Hindu propaganda of the separatists.

Whenever there is an incident like Shopian in Kashmir, it is used as a weapon against the Indian security forces. What is heartbreakingly agonising is that they have little sense of remorse and compunction in insulting and degrading the Indian security forces who have saved Kashmir in four major wars with Pakistan, protected the life and property of Kashmiri people from the Pakistan-trained terrorists and who have rescued Kashmiri people during natural calamities. Not only that, the Indian forces are the harbingers of prosperity in the state as they have contributed brilliantly to refine and elevate the living standard of the Kashmiri people, having played major role in the installation of about 1200

micro hydel projects to bring water and electricity for agriculture and farming in the far-flung areas of the valley. The bunch of separatists and fundamentalists who are yelling and screaming for withdrawal of security forces rather owe a sense of deep gratitude to them for providing them and their families cover of safety and security. Undoubtedly, the Indian security forces have proved themselves a boon for Kashmir.

Even comparatively, the conduct and character of Indian security forces in Kashmir is vastly different, rather much superior, as compared to the Pakistani army's brutality in PoK, Baluchistan, Waziristan and US forces' viciousness in Afghanistan and Iraq. The separatist leaders who slam baseless and unfounded allegations on the Indian security forces must realise in their senses that their withdrawal from the valley will invite innumerable troubles from Pakistan and put the national security in grave danger. The Pak-supported terrorists will gain strength and and pro-Pakistan moles in the state administration and police force will be free to carry out their reprehensible acts. Such people must learn a lesson from the scores of obnoxious crimes of rape and murder of their sisters and mothers in the valley by the Pakistani armed infiltrators. The Indian security forces have always displayed exemplary courage and patriotism in fighting the terrorism over the last 20 years.

Anti-India Conspiracy

It is amazing that in the last 20 years, the terrorists have committed countless heinous crimes like murder of innocent people, rape, explosion and arson, aided and abetted by Pakistan, but none of the separatist leaders or organisations has ever raised the demand for dismantling the terrorist networks and camps or cleansing the state administration of the Pakistani agents. Sadly, no action has ever been taken by the state or the union government against those anti-national elements who openly raise pro-Pakistan slogans and burn Indian Tricolour and constitution. But small incident

anywhere in the valley is blown out of proportion and is used to defame the Indian security forces.

After the Shopian incident, the manner in which the separatist leaders like Ali Shah Geelani, PDP leader Ms. Mehbooba Mufti and the Chief Minister Omar Abdullah himself raised hue and cry for removal of the security forces and cancellation of their special powers is indicative of the deep-rooted conspiracies at work against Indian nation. Worse and shocking, immediately after the Chief Minister Omar Abdullah demanded for withdrawal of the security forces from the valley, Pakistan Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Geelani took an opportunity to issue a statement on the very next day, harping on the same demand. This was an outrageous and undiplomatic act of intervention in India's internal affairs. It is amazing that neither India's Prime Minister nor Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir reacted to this highly objectionable conduct of Pakistan. On the contrary, the separatist leaders, welcoming the statement of Pakistan's Prime Minister increased their pressure on the Indian government for withdrawal of the security forces from the valley.

The media in Kashmir, too, assailed the Indian security forces. In fact, the entire media of Kashmir is solely controlled by the separatist leaders right from the beginning whereas our national media, quite irresponsibly and unprofessionally, is not taking up the impending danger to the security and integrity of the nation, with the requisite concern, knowing fully well that in the present scenario, the only guarantee against the Kashmir's becoming a Muslim country rests with our security forces. More importantly, Indian political parties, the government, media and columnists do not adequately expose the expanding anti-India milieu in Kashmir. The different political parties in Kashmir viz. National Conference, Congress, PDP and various separatist organisations seem to have reached a consensus on the issue of withdrawal of security forces

from the state as also the special powers given to them. Needless to say, most of the political parties as also the government have a blinkered view of the grave reality due to their shoddy Muslim vote-bank considerations.

Secure Kashmir means Secure India

If the Indian government, unfortunately, with a view to appease the Kashmiri Muslims, pulls out the security forces from Kashmir and withdraws their special powers, the entire Jammu & Kashmir will be into the hands of pro-Pakistan elements. This is, in fact, the long cherished goal of the terrorists shedding innocent blood in the valley for decades under the patronage of the pro-Pakistan separatists in their efforts to make Kashmir an independent Muslim nation.

National Conference, the ruling party in Jammu & Kashmir, at the time of assembly elections in 2008, had clearly stated in their election manifesto that if voted to power, both the Indian security forces and 'Armed Forces Special Powers Act' will be withdrawn. It is, therefore, logical for Omar Abdullah, the Chief Minister and leader of National Conference to fulfil the promises made to the electorate in their manifesto. Dr. Farukh Abdullah, the Patron of National Conference and father of Omar Abdullah is union Minister in the cabinet of Dr. Manmohan Singh. He, too, is doing his utmost employing all his faculties to fulfil the promises made to the Kashmiri people.

The Jammu-Kashmir police to whom special powers are proposed to be given for maintaining law and order and security is a force packed with a large number of pro-Pakistan and separatist elements. It is well known that in encounters with the terrorists the conduct of the state police is highly unprofessional and incompetent as the terrorists often escape after committing crimes and there have been innumerable cases where the officers and jawans of the state police were found to be assisting, protecting and facilitating

the escape of the deadly terrorists.

After removal of the Indian security forces and their special powers the terrorists will easily reach the rural areas. It is part of the new strategy evolved by the pro-Pakistan separatists to spread terror in the rural areas as the rural voters had participated in the last Lok Sabha and State assembly elections with considerable interest ignoring the appeals of the separatist leaders to boycott the elections. It was a clean victory for the Indian nation.

The pressure of Indian security forces on the terrorists is on the increase. Their despondency is quite apparent as problems for Pakistan itself, their mentor and abettor, are escalating. The general public is extremely fed up and disillusioned with the trouble-torn environment which the separatists have created in Kashmir for the past two decades. Even the pro-Pakistan separatist elements have now realised that they can not win the confidence of the Kashmiri people by creating terror and violence. This perception has probably induced them to take recourse to peaceful means like strikes, dharna, demonstration etc. In this scenario, there is greater need for strengthening the hands of the security forces to enable them unleash the finishing blow to the terrorists which is the right way to deal with them.

With the withdrawal of Indian security forces from Kashmir and subsequent transfer of special powers to Jammu & Kashmir police the number of terrorist camps and hide-outs along the border will substantially increase. The Swat valley in Pakistan, which is the citadel of Taliban, is too close to the Indo-Pak border.

Once the 'Armed Forces Special Powers Act' is revoked, the situation in Kashmir will relapse into the 1989-like phase. At that time too, there was government of National Conference-Congress combine in Jammu & Kashmir which bowed before the terrorists and separatists and the Union government committed the blunder of downsizing the security forces. The result – the terrorism

proliferated its deadly fangs. The history bears the testimony that whenever there is reduction in the security forces' strength, the terrorist and separatist organisations become more active and violence escalates thus posing greater threat to peace and harmony.

Kashmir is the first entry point for the terrorists and Pakistani infiltrators. In every incident of terrorist violence that has taken place in India in the last two decades the point of origin has invariably been traced to Pakistan. Therefore, strong presence of Indian security forces in Kashmir is extremely and undoubtedly imperative for the security and integrity of the nation.

The Jammu & Kashmir police is absolutely incompetent to tackle the Pakistan-supported terrorism in the state. According to Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, there are 72 battalions of CRPF posted in the interiors of the state besides Indian army whereas strength of the state police is limited to 32 battalions. Also, the state police do not have the latest grade weapons and is poorly trained. It will be suicidal if the security of the state is exclusively left in the hands of the state police.

Need for Nation-wide Awakening

Therefore, it is crucial and indispensable to wipe out terrorism from Jammu & Kashmir to save India from the Pak-sponsored Islamic extremism. This highly sensitive task concerning the security and integrity of our nation can only be accomplished by the Indian security forces and army equipped with special powers. Though they have achieved considerable success in crushing and curbing terrorism in the state but the task of elimination of Pakistan-sponsored terrorism has yet to be completed. As per the government security agencies' report, there are more than 800 well-equipped and well-trained terrorists present in the state. There are, reportedly, more than 100 training camps functioning in Pakistan churning up thousands of deadly terrorists ready to infiltrate into Kashmir. The terrorists operating in Kashmir are armed with

hi-tech and modern weapons made in Pakistan and China.

The circumstances in Jammu & Kashmir have taken the vicious turn. The governments, both the Central and State, bogged down by their mindset of Muslim appeasement, lack of determination and requisite will power to deal with the separatists. Apprehensively, the long list of monumental blunders committed by the governments since 1947 might include one more - 'withdrawal of the Indian security forces from Kashmir and Special powers given to them.' The Vice President Mohammed Hamid Ansari while addressing the students of Kashmir University in Srinagar, clearly stated that Acts declaring Kashmir a terrorism-affected region will be rescinded, the special powers of security forces eliminated and their strength curtailed. He also mentioned that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has already approved the above proposal. It is the same 'Ansari' who, as Chairman of 'Kashmir Working Group' had advocated for termination of the special powers given to the Indian security forces.

If the Indian public and political parties, rising above their shortsighted approach did not stand up and oppose this government move vociferously, the entire Jammu & Kashmir region will slip into the hands of pro-Pakistan separatists. The security of the Indian nation lies in the security of Kashmir.



Advent of Nationalism in Ladakh

Ladakh, the inseparable part of India, remotely situated at a height of 9,000 - 23,000 ft. from the sea level, is mostly enclosed with chilly storms. Sometimes, the temperature falls to minus 60 mark. In the two districts of Leh and Kargil, there is one parliamentary and four assembly constituencies. With a population of 2.5 lakh people, Leh has majority of Buddhists and Kargil is Muslim-majority area. The Christians and Muslims keep coercing the Buddhists, by all means, to convert to their fold. They resort to all sorts of malicious propaganda and falsehood to convince the Ladakhis that their region Ladakh was not a part of India and Buddhism was not related to Hindu *dharma* in any manner. Even China has now started gawking and gauging the entire Ladakh region with an eagle's eye.

Ladakh Kalyan Sangh (Ladakh Phande Chhospa)

Exploiting the poverty-stricken Ladakhis, the Muslim and Christian leaders have intensified their attempts to convert them into their faith. Though RSS has, right from the beginning, focussed on this development in Ladakh, but it got involved in the region, with concern, in the eighties. With the special efforts initiated by

Prant Pracharak of the region at that time, Shri Indresh Kumar Garg, various social and religious activities got underway. Under his guidance, a beginning was made by holding meetings on such subjects as service, culture, education and *chintan* (contemplation) and thus a base of *Hindutva* and *Bhartiyata* was laid in Ladakh. Initially, working directly under the auspices of RSS in this Buddhist-dominated region posed certain difficulties. Therefore, an organisation in the name of '*Ladakh Phande Chhospa*' (*Ladakh Kalyan Sangh*) was formed which convened and coordinated various activities. A senior Sangh official in Srinagar Shri Amarnath Vaishnavi visited Ladakh and provided an organisational structure to the activities of *Ladakh Kalyan Sangh*. Besides, various Sangh *Pracharaks* of Jammu like S/Shri Bhushan Pal, Dinesh Pachauri, Shasikant Khajuria, Ajay Jambwal etc. also visited Ladakh for short intervals to help in the organisational matters. These people worked really hard to inculcate nationalist spirit among the people. The various programmes undertaken in the region with the help of RSS volunteers and officials have impeded the anti-India and anti-Hindu activities of Muslim fundamentalists and Christian missionaries. In 1986-87, Christian Bishop Church of Srinagar conspired to take 54 *Boudh* children out of the country in the name of higher education with the real intent of converting them to Christianity. They were misled and taken to unidentified place promising foreign tour. The RSS volunteers and Ladakhi organisations launched a movement and with their efforts the Ladakhi children were rescued. Thereafter, in 1992-93, 8 *Boudh* minor girls were rescued from the clutches of the church in Manali (Himachal Pradesh). Such activities of the *swayamsevak*s have earned healthy respect for RSS and its working from the Buddhist society.

Human Development Projects

Ladakh Phande Chhospa initiated and undertook various

educational and skill-learning projects for the children of Ladakh viz. Sewing, Yoga, Health, Computer etc. Cultural and nationalist values are ingrained through daily recital of *Gayatri Mantra*, *Vande Matram*, *Boudh* prayers, national and patriotic songs. In a housing colony in Leh, Manju Shri Bhawan has been built on a plot of land admeasuring one kanal which was inaugurated on 29 July, 1999 in the august presence of Buddhist spiritual Guru Rev. Satkana Rimpochhe, Swami Satyamitranandji and Swami Brahmdevji. In Leh, Manju Shri is adored as the reincarnation of Ma. Saraswati. This *Bhawan* has been built in congruence with the Ladakhi culture and tradition. In Ladakh, there are two schools while in Leh, a school by the name of Bhartiya Vidya Niketan equipped with own building and good facilities provides education upto 8th standard. It can also provide boarding facilities for 40 students. In village Abot, in Janskar valley, a primary school has been opened. Besides, in the rural Ladakh, 45 Akel Schools are functioning satisfactorily. As per the extant system, an educated youth from the village itself is appointed as the Primary teacher. Classes are held by assembling a group of 30-40 children in a house, temple, worship place or even under a tree in the open. After their primary education, these children are sent to the nearby government or private school for further education. Under the skill-learning projects, training in sewing is provided to the women folk of the region.

With a view to conduct the social awakening programmes more effectively and consistently, cultural centres are being managed in 53 villages in Ladakh which provide moral education to the villagers as per the tenets of Buddhism. Through the medium of prayers, *Gayatri Mantra* and life sketches of our great national personalities, a national awakening movement is in progress.

In the far-flung areas, a scheme has been formulated under which, with their guardians' consent, children are sent for education

to places like Kurukshetra, Delhi and Shimla. The organisations like Rashtra Sevika Samiti and Surya Foundation are also running schools providing free education to the students.

Organisations like Akhil Bhartiya Vidyarathi Parishad, Akhil Bhartiya Mazdoor Sangh, Bhartiya Shiksha Samiti and Rashtra Sevika Samiti have also opened their centres in Ladakh to carry out welfare and humanitarian activities. The local Buddhists are also being motivated to contribute in such activities.

Sindhu Darshan Abhiyan

Among the various rivers originating from the glaciers in the Himalayan hills, the largest is *Sindhu* (Indus) river, which has given us the name 'Hindu'. It flows for a distance of about 200 km. in Ladakh before entering Pakistan. Acknowledged as the place of origin of the Indian culture, the regions falling on the banks of this virtuous river have great national significance. An idea of organising an annual event '*Sindhu Darshan*' arose out of the vision of holding a mega cultural programme on the bank of the propitious river. As a result, the '*Sindhu Darshan Abhiyan*' got underway in 1997 with the efforts of the BJP leader Shri Lal Krishan Advani, ex-Editor of Hindi Weekly, '*Paanchjanya*' Shri Tarun Vijay and various religious leaders. This is a 3-day annual event in which various cultural and devotional programmes are conducted including the holy worship of the *Sidhu Nadi Jal* (water of Indus river).

Initiated with a view to mingle the entire Ladakh region with India from a social, religious and national perspective, the '*Sindhu Darshan Abhiyan*' is becoming an increasingly successful and popular event, well attended by people belonging to different faiths, castes, as also tourists from across the country. With the increase in the number of visitors from distant places exchanging pleasantries with the Ladakhis the bonhomie so created epitomises the notion of a United India. Followers of Buddhism, the Ladakhis have now

become conscious of their Indian identity. About five lakh Ladakhis attend the annual event which is also becoming a fascinating show for the Muslim brethren. Through this movement the people of the region have also come to realise that the problem of Jammu & Kashmir alongwith Ladakh region is a matter of grave concern for the entire nation.

Initially, the above event was managed by the social, religious and also political leaders from outside Ladakh, besides the government's participation for a couple of years. But gradually, the local Buddhist organisations and general public evinced keen interest and conducted the programme. Now, it is conducted and managed by '*Ladakh Phande Chhospa*'.

Sangh officials and volunteers too played a big role in the smooth conduct of the above projects and activities. In Leh and Janskar valley, 2 Sangh shakhas are held. *Prathmic Shiksha Varg* (Primary Education Sessions) are also being conducted for the past 10 years. Sangh's (RSS) senior functionaries viz. *Prant* and *Akhil Bhartiya* officials pay regular visits on *Pravaas* to these areas. In a way, the activities initiated in one of the remotest parts of India have brought about a wave of national awakening in Ladakh.



Ladakhi Civilization in Peril

Ladakh, the Buddhist-majority region, is suppressed under the authoritarian rule of Muslim dominated Kashmir. Despite being part and parcel of the state of Jammu & Kashmir, the religious-minded and peace-loving Ladakhi people have been struggling for years, for their fundamental and legitimate rights. The Kashmir-centred governments of Jammu & Kashmir have deprived the Ladakhis, like the people of Jammu, of their basic rights, treating their territory as a colony of Kashmir. It is noteworthy that from political standpoint, this part of Jammu & Kashmir, victim of gross discrimination is culturally, linguistically and geographically, vastly different from rest of the region.

The Ladakh region assumes special significance from the point of view of national security. It is in no way linked to the Kashmir valley. Kashmir is almost fully cloaked in the Islamic culture. Islam and Buddhism are poles apart with no commonality or cohesion. The culture and civilization of Buddhist Ladakh bears much closer rapport with the Hindu-majority Jammu region. In fact, the *Boudh* faith is the portrayal of Hindutva and Hindu culture. Like Sikhism, Jainism, Shaivism, Vaishnav and Lingayat, Buddhism too is an integral ingredient of the composite Hindu culture.

Geographically, the shortest route linking Ladakh with India is through Kishtwar and Padar in Jammu region. In terms of regional culture and location, areas like Lahoul, Spiti and Pangi of Himachal Pradesh are more in consonance with Ladakh. There is also an opinion that by joining all the aforesaid regions together a mountainous state in line with Arunachal Pradesh can be formed. Now, Ladakh has also been connected by road with Lahoul and Kullu in Himachal Pradesh. At present, the road link from Srinagar to Ladakh is quite arduous, long and impracticable. Thus, even from the viewpoint of administrative feasibility, Ladakh's continuing as a part of Kashmir is illogical. Ladakh is a vast region abundantly rich in natural resources. If properly harnessed and fostered, this region has the potential to become fully self-reliant.

A vast area of 37,555 sq. km. of Ladakh is under the illegal occupation of China which has an eagle's eye on the entire Ladakh region. Pakistan has given to China an area of 5,180 sq.km. out of the 78,114 sq. km. of Pak-occupied Kashmir (PoK). Combining this area with Ladakh under its occupation, China, by laying a massive road connectivity, has launched many developmental projects in the region. On the other hand, Pakistan, supported by a large number of Kashmiri Muslims and armed and trained mujahideen / terrorists, is hell bent on slashing Kashmir from India.

The Pak-sponsored terrorism is also making inroads in Ladakh region. In Muslim dominated Leh district of Ladakh the terrorist camps are mushrooming. Sporadic incidents of terrorist violence take place in *Boudh* residential areas and religious places in Ladakh. Exploiting the poor and simple-natured Buddhist people the fundamentalist Kashmiri *mullahs* and *maulvis* are carrying out their 'conversion' campaigns. They, also, often indulge in misleading and alluring the innocent and unsuspecting local girls to marry the Muslims. They usually employ all sorts of pressure tactics – temptation, intimidation, persuasion etc. to carry out the

conversions.

Therefore, it is evidently clear that China, Pakistan and Kashmiri militants are painstakingly working for dismembering India. But, the Indian government, turning its back to the grave circumstances and following its policy of Muslim appeasement and conceding to the separatists is preparing to push the state of Jammu & Kashmir into the dark pit of autonomy which might prove costly for the nation. With this suicidal move, the floodgates of various eventualities will open, viz. Kashmir falling into the lap of Pakistan, Ladakh shoving into the Chinese claws and the Jammu region exposing itself to the forces of subversion.

Majority of the social and religious organisations in Ladakh believe that the only plausible way of saving Ladakh and its culture is by way of making it a Union Territory, directly under the control of the Central government. In that case, Indian army would need to be adequately deployed for security of the Ladakh region. The protection of the culture, social fabric and borders of Ladakh is crucial and indispensable for our national security.



Quest for a Solution

Need for National Consensus

The anti-India separatist furore which erupted in Jammu & Kashmir is now turning into a huge inferno. Different political parties, social and religious organisations, separatist outfits and experts and observers on Kashmir affairs offer their own package of solutions and remedies. The sad part of the story is that their approach is, principally, discordant rather than consensual and constructive. That is why the Kashmir problem even after six decades continues to be groping for an answer. It is perhaps the first and the only crucial problem which, despite innumerable rounds of inconclusive meets, continues to dog the nation. Some of the major contributory factors causing this stalemate are- vote-bank politics, communal fanaticism, lack of spirit of national harmony and patriotism, pro-Pakistan attitude and foreign intervention.

The Kashmir- based organisations and political parties viz, National Conference, Peoples' Democratic Party, Huriyat Conference, Tehrik-e-Huriyat, various terrorist groups and Panun Kashmir have recommended several options to solve the issue, like - Autonomy, Self-rule, Greater Kashmir, Accession to Pakistan, Complete independence and Separate Pandit homeland in Kashmir.

Such suggestions were bound to prove inconsequential as they were based on religious, communal, regional and political considerations and compulsions rather than national perspective and perception. In the Jammu region too there are a few groups and parties who are demanding for a separate state of Jammu. The solution closer to rationality appears to be the one that the state of Jammu & Kashmir may be divided into three separate states – Kashmir, Ladakh and Jammu, with Ladakh given the status of a Union Territory. Whatever way the complex issue of Kashmir is solved, it is of paramount importance that the national integrity, security and Kashmir's welfare outweigh all other considerations otherwise the very existence of Kashmir will be in danger. For resolving any issue, a strong political will is a pre-requisite but in the case of Kashmir, right from the beginning it has been pathetically fragile political will which has worsened matters and has emboldened the anti-India and separatist forces. With the passage of time, the perception of 'nation' is becoming conspicuous by its absence.

Options suggested

The various options and suggestions given by different parties are mentioned below -

National Conference : Greater Autonomy

It is well-known that immediately after assuming power in the state in 1996, the National Conference led by Dr. Farukh Abdullah vociferously raised the demand of Greater autonomy for Jammu & Kashmir. In November, 1996 itself, a State Autonomy Committee (SAC) was constituted under the chairmanship of Dr. Karan Singh. But when this government move faced derisive and disdainful reaction from various quarters, Dr. Karan Singh, apprehending disgrace, resigned from the committee. Subsequently, G.M. Shah, a close friend of Dr. Farukh Abdullah took over as Chairman of the committee. On 15th April, 1999, SAC presented its report in the

state assembly. But no action was taken on this report by the state government. At last, after exhaustive debate in the assembly in June 2000, the recommendation of autonomy as proposed in the SAC report was passed by 2/3rd majority. In the midst of the boycott by the members opposing the recommendations, particularly BJP MLAs, the resolution was passed and sent to the Union government.

The Union government, on 4th July, 2000, rejected the recommendation with the assertion that it is not only against the spirit of Indian constitution, it is also not in the interest of the people of Jammu & Kashmir. It further contended that the proposal for autonomy invalidates the Indira-Sheikh Agreement signed in 1975 which approves the post-1953 constitutional status.

The salient features of the proposal for 'Greater Autonomy' are as under :-

1. In Jammu & Kashmir, the constitutional status prevailing prior to 1953 may be accepted.
2. All the laws, ordinances framed and effected by the Indian government and made applicable after 1953 may be rescinded.
3. In line with the constitutional practice followed before 1952, designation of Chief Minister and Governor may be reinstated as the 'Prime Minister' and 'Sadr-e-Riyasat' respectively.
4. Replacing the 'temporary' character of the Article 370 of the Indian constitution, it may be declared a 'permanent' and 'special' article.
5. The article 356 of the Indian constitution which empowers the Union government to dissolve any state government should be made 'non-applicable' in the state of Jammu & Kashmir.
6. The state of Jammu & Kashmir may be vested with powers to change or amend its constitution.

7. The Union government may have, under its jurisdiction, matters relating to defence, foreign affairs, telecommunication and currency but all other matters will remain in the domain of the state government.
8. The President of India may revoke all such Acts and ordinances which are outside the purview of the Constitutional order on Kashmir (1950) and Delhi Declaration, (1952).

Undoubtedly, the proposal of Greater autonomy put forth by the National Conference is the latest version of the aspirations of Sheikh Abdullah who wanted 'Complete independence for Kashmir'. This proposal is an open challenge to the integrity, secularism and constitutional character of the nation as also to the social harmony between Hindus and Muslims.

Advocating for Greater autonomy, National Conference has also added to it its concept of 'Regional autonomy'. Accordingly, two regions of the state viz. Jammu and Kashmir will be further divided into 8 more regions, each region having its own regional or provincial council. This regional council will function on the lines of the state assembly. Under the concept of regional autonomy the broader composition in the state has been indicated as follows -

<u>Province</u>	<u>Constituents/ Districts</u>
Kamraj	Baramullah, Kupwara
Nandbad	Badgam, Srinagar
Maraj	Anantnag, Pulwama
Chenab valley	Doda, Udhampur (Mahour Tehsil)
Jammu	Jammu, Kathua, Udhampur (except Mahour Tehsil)
Pir Panjal	Poonch, Rajouri
Ladakh	Leh, Kargil

As this composition under Regional autonomy has been made on the basis of religion and not administrative convenience, this

option is politically motivated and seeks further fragmentation of the state of Jammu & Kashmir, already tarnished and ruined by the separatists by creating communal discord among the Hindus, Muslims and the Buddhists. It is clear that an administrative set-up installed on the fragmented politico-religious structure will spell disaster. The rapport between two major communities in the state will be further strained though it will fulfil the aspirations of communal-minded parties like National Conference.

Peoples' Democratic Party : Self-Rule

In February, 2007, Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP), the second largest party in the state placed before the people its detailed proposal of Self-Rule. This formula, too, is analogous to the National Conference's proposal of Greater autonomy and thus carries the same conspiracy of taking the state back to the pre-1953 status. Regions like Jammu & Kashmir, Pak-occupied Kashmir (PoK) and Gilgit have been brought under the ambit of Self-rule. Accordingly, the two stretches of Kashmir on either side of the Line of Control (LOC) will be merged into a bigger, greater Kashmir. This greater and independent Kashmir will be controlled by both India and Pakistan and issues of foreign policy, currency and security will be jointly addressed by them. This 'Joint Kashmir' will have its own constitution and flag. PDP leaders regard this formula as the panacea for all the problems-social, political, constitutional and economic, believing that the political and constitutional provisions under the Self-rule will also save Kashmiriat.

The basis of the constitutional structure of the Self-rule is the Delhi Agreement, 1952, Article 370 of the Indian constitution, Karachi Agreement, 1949 (relating to northern areas of Gilgit, Baltistan) and interim constitution of 1974 regarding PoK. Under the abovementioned instruments, special powers are proposed to be granted to Jammu & Kashmir and PoK by both India and

Pakistan. The concept of 'Joint Kashmir', with the above provisions in place, would in effect, mean larger control by Pakistan than India.

Some of the key features of the proposal of the Self-rule are as follows-

1. All the laws and ordinances framed by the Indian government as applicable in Jammu & Kashmir will stand nullified. LOC dividing the two Kashmirs will stand revoked.
2. There will be unhindered free flow of activities including trade and commerce.
3. The Indian security forces engaged in fighting the terrorism will be withdrawn and the 'Armed Forces Special Powers Act' will be annulled.
4. Regional and sub-regional councils will be constituted for administrative mechanism in the joint Kashmir,
5. With the joint structure in defence, currency and foreign affairs, a new 'amalgamated political culture' will emerge.

Obviously, the Self-rule formula of PDP, too, like the National Conference's concept of 'Greater autonomy' has the same features and characteristics as the oft-repeated stance of 'Complete independence for Kashmir'. The revival of pre-1953 status clearly implies complete cessation of control by the Indian Parliament, President, Constitution, Supreme Court, Election commission etc. over the state of Jammu & Kashmir. Similarly, with the National Flag and the Constitution becoming insignificant it will be compulsory for the Indians to obtain permits, passport, visa etc. for visit to the state.

Huriyat Conference : United States of Kashmir (USK)

Huriyat Conference, a representative organisation of about 40 separatist outfits, has always played the role of a guide, supporter

and patron in all the leading movements launched for the independence of Kashmir. Like Pakistan, Huriyat leaders too, acknowledging the terrorists involved in violence as Mujahideen or freedom fighters, hold them in high esteem. They take pride in joining the funeral processions of the terrorists who are killed in encounters with the police and security forces. Showing them reverence as per Islamic customs the Huriyat leaders honour the dreaded terrorists as the martyrs of freedom. On the contrary, they feel no shame or compunction in insulting and hurling abuses at the Indian security forces.

Initially, all the leaders of Huriyat Conference were adamant on the right of self-determination for the Kashmiris. But, having failed in their stance, they have now come up with a new model 'Greater Kashmir', christened as 'United States of Kashmir' by their chairman, Mirwaiz Umar Farukh. This formula is quite similar to the cliché proposed by Pakistan's ex-President Gen. Parvez Musharraf. As per Musharraf's proposal, the state of Jammu & Kashmir may be divided into 7 special regions with both India and Pakistan having joint control over the entire state. Besides, withdrawal of the Indian security forces and establishment of Self-rule in Jammu & Kashmir are the special conditions in Musharraf's formula. Though Huriyat Conference has expressed concurrence with this formula, it has, however, added that it may be made applicable to the people i.e. Kashmiris and areas on both sides. Huriyat favours formation of an independent nation under the umbrella of 'United States of Kashmir' by uniting regions of Jammu, Rajouri, Poonch, Doda, Kashmir, Ladakh, PoK, Gilgit and Baltistan.

Overall, this proposal of Huriyat Conference is impracticable, unrealistic and politically motivated.

Tehrik-e-Huriyat : Accession to Pakistan

Estranged from the so-called moderate party Huriyat

Conference, pro-Pakistan Tehrik-e-Huriyat, led by the separatist leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani is still adamantly harping on the 'right of Self-determination' for the Kashmiri people. This idea of self-determination has been vaguely mentioned in the files and documents of Security council, awaiting decision for the last 63 years. On the basis of this slack reference, Geelani is pinning hopes on accession of Kashmir to Pakistan. He believes that the cultural traits, life style, ways of worship etc. of Kashmiri people are more akin to the Pakistani ethos. In a way, Geelani joins the group of people who, by their exploits and philosophy, are anti-India, anti-Hindutva and promoters of separatism. Such people believe that India has made Kashmir its colony on the strength of its security forces and Kashmir, being a Muslim-dominated region, deserves merger with Pakistan.

Geelani is so keyed-up about Kashmir's merger with Pakistan that, to achieve this end, he finds all means, violent or non-violent, justified, knowing fully well that the constitution assembly elected by the people of Jammu & Kashmir, by opting accession of Kashmir to India, has made this right of self-determination a preposterous proposition. Now, people of the state participate in the elections to the parliament or assembly, held under the Indian constitution, with greater enthusiasm and interest. This democratic process is much more logical and significant than the right of self-determination. Also, Geelani knows that the people of Kashmir are not inclined to be subject of Pakistan in the face of dire conditions of poverty, paucity, unemployment and political instability prevailing in that country; whereas with the bountiful packages and special status given by the Indian government Kashmiri people are enjoying affluence and prosperity. In fact, to ensure his political survival and religious status, Geelani resorts to such populism and jingoism often by raising slogans like *Kashmir banega Pakistan* (Kashmir will become Pakistan).

Apart from Huriyat Conference and Tehrik-e-Huriyat, all other separatist groups want to see Kashmir as an independent nation totally disjoined from India. The banned Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), Democratic Freedom Party and all other outfits supporting independence who are vehemently opposed to Kashmir's accession to India, do not favour its accession to Pakistan either. They too demand an independent nationhood for Kashmir. But there is no denying the fact that all these separatist leaders aid, assist and abet Pakistan-sponsored terrorism on Indian soil. Though outwardly, they condemn terrorist violence and shed crocodile's tears, but show no guilt or penitence in extending honour and accolade to the ruthless killers of innocent people.

Terrorist Groups : Total Independence

Fighting for the complete independence of Kashmir, there are about four dozen lethal terrorist organisations, consisting of trigger-happy and bellicose Kashmiri youth, operating in the state. Their targets are Indian security forces, Jammu & Kashmir police, top bureaucrats, politicians and business tycoons, Indian and foreign tourists, pilgrims, besides innocent people. Trained and brainwashed in the innumerable terror camps in Pakistan and PoK, to carry out carnage in India, they are, though, a bit exasperated with violence, but their strength and striking ability has never waned. The entire terror mechanism viz. sending the youth to Pakistan, their training, facilitating their return, posting them at critical points, directing the dreaded missions and making safe escape, is present both in India and Pakistan, under the direct supervision and control of Pakistani government, Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and fundamentalist leaders.

The terrorist groups and their mentors are not interested in the channels of dialogue, agreement or amicable peace process. Major terrorist organisations like Lashkar-e-Tayeba, Jayesh-e-Mohammed and Hizbul Mujahideen have rejected the proposals

of autonomy, Self-rule, territorial division or Indo-Pak joint control. Syed Salahuddin, the Supreme Commander of Jihad Council, the representative body of about 25 militant organisations, expressing their intents and objectives, made a categorical statement in this regard. Accordingly, all the proposals and options suggested so far to resolve the Kashmir issue are impairing the cause of *Jung-e-Azadi*. Exhorting the Kashmiri youth to continue the 'war for freedom' he mentioned that holding talks with the Indian government was a futile exercise. India and their security forces are destroying Kashmiriat in Kashmir. The Kashmiri people are being tormented and deprived of the opportunities for their progress and growth.

In his whipping rage, not even sparing Pakistan, the chief patron and epicentre of terrorist violence, Syed Salahuddin accuses that they, too, diverting from the prime objective of 'total freedom for Kashmir' are making absurd propositions like Self-rule and joint control. As a supporter of the right of Self-determination for Kashmiris, he asserts that nothing short of 'total freedom' would be acceptable to the Kashmiris.

Panun Kashmir : Hindu Homeland

The representatives of India in Kashmir, its glorious traditions, Hindu culture and custodians of true Kashmiriat, the Kashmiri Pandits are leading an exiled life as refugees in various parts of the country. Numbering about 4 lakhs, they have paid the price for being Hindus. Besides these Pandits, who were victimised and forced out of their homeland by the Pakistan-sponsored terrorism, there are lakhs of Kashmiri Pandits who, before or after 1947, quit Kashmir in the face of communal and hostile approach of the Muslim society. Uprooted from their moorings they long to return to their motherland but the situation is absolutely precarious and compounded by some highly volatile circumstances, anti-Hindu mindset of the separatists, terrorists' fear as also clear warnings against their return back home.

There are various organisations of the Kashmiri Pandits which are working hard on different options for their safe and honourable return. But the most significant thing, in this regard, is the creation of a conducive environment in the state free from terrorist fear, violence, communal strife, fanaticism and regional discrimination. For their safe return, the restoration of confidence among Kashmiri Pandits is essential and the Muslim society must come forward and take the initiative. This is, no doubt, an uphill task as the raging fire of terrorism has cast an indelible and dreadful impact on the public psyche.

Panun Kashmir, an organisation of the displaced Pandits is demanding a 'Hindu Homeland' in Kashmir right from the beginning so that they can lead a peaceful and secured life. Accordingly, the governance and security of the Hindu homeland should vest with the Indian Government. If the Muslim society can not ensure the safety of displaced Kashmiri Pandits in their homes, then they may be given separate territory for peaceful survival. Though the Kashmiri Pandits have the right to settle in any part of Kashmir Valley but in view of the traumatic conditions created by the separatists and fundamentalists, any thought of return to their homes would be suicidal. It is in this backdrop that the demand for a separate Hindu Homeland has emerged. And how safe would this homeland be, is a different matter wrapped in uncertainty.

Though in the separate 'Hindu Homeland' theory, there appears to be a ray of hope for safe return of the displaced Hindus yet this apparently pleasing option, too, raises certain vital questions. How and who will decide about the allocation of territory, distribution of resources, land for agriculture, housing, means of transport and basic amenities. Will all the Kashmiri Pandits choose to accommodate in this separate homeland? Will this homeland be permanently under the security cover of Indian army? Will this Hindu homeland created out of Kashmir on the basis of religion of

two communities i.e Hindus and Muslims, be free from the scourge of terrorism? Who will stop the disgruntled and misguided Kashmiri youth from infiltration into Hindu territory to create disturbance? The geographical location of the Hindu homeland enclosed by the Muslim Kashmir on all sides would itself be extremely dangerous and unsafe. Therefore, it is crucially important to analyse, in depth, the issue of safe return of Kashmiri Pandits to their homes before formulating an effective and concrete plan.

Mutual Dialogue

One of the options for solving the fast deteriorating problem of Kashmir is the process of mutual dialogue between the affected parties. But, sadly, this path has met with little success as the talks the Union government had with various separatist leaders in the past did not yield any result. During the tenure of Ex- Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, the government held two rounds of talks with major pro-independence parties including the Huriyat Conference but in vain. The present Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh too initiated talks with the leaders of several separatist groups operating in Kashmir, but the confrontational stance and non-conciliatory attitude of the said leaders during the process of dialogue make the entire exercise a damp squib.

Worse, the Indian government lacks the requisite gumption and straightforwardness to tell the separatist leaders that the process of dialogue must take place within the ambit of Indian constitution. But, rather ironically, the separatist leaders succeed in browbeating the government representatives. It is woeful that during discussion, they have the audacity and impudence to raise such outrageous demands as withdrawal of Indian security forces from Kashmir and the special powers given to them to contain terrorism, unconditional release of the freedom fighters (terrorists) and grant of financial assistance and professional avenues to them.

What happens to the process of dialogue - the government

finds it difficult to accept unreasonable and unjust demands, the talks fail, separatist leaders attributing the failure of talks to the government return and get into the groove of anti – India campaign.

Communal Frenzy

Before reaching out for a solution, it is essential to analyse the problem of Jammu & Kashmir and various aspects associated with it. The problem in Jammu & Kashmir is not a simple law and order problem. It is the anti-nationalism emanating out of communal intolerance and radicalism, uncontrollable through the process of dialogue, settlement and economic packages. Profusely aided and abetted by Pakistan, the Kashmiri youth has taken up arms for Islamic *Jihad*. Evolving through the past 700 years, the islamisation of Kashmir valley is now shaping up. The mass exodus of Kashmiri Hindus from the Kashmir valley has already made Kashmir shorn of Hindus. The diabolical schemes are already in place to eliminate the Hindu heritage and Indian culture. In their *jihad* for 'total independence for Kashmir', while in the first phase of their plan, the forces of separatism succeeded in causing massive migration of Hindus from Kashmir, the second phase aims at launching a *gorilla* war against the Hindus working in police, defence and government establishments. The grave malady can be tackled only if the intellectuals, wearing masks of secularism, refrain from making the wrong diagnosis and address the issue with all earnestness.

In Kashmir, it is neither poverty nor political discrimination, but religious intolerance and prejudice which has created havoc in the state. The abundant amenities and largesse available to the people of Jammu & Kashmir under Article 370 of the constitution are not available to the people of other states. Judging by the yardsticks of political and economic status, the regions of Jammu and Ladakh are far more economically backward and politically deprived than Kashmir. Today, whatever is happening in Kashmir, it is in the name and for the purpose of Islam and *Nizam-e-*

Mustafa. As Kashmir is Muslim-dominated state, the political authority is bound to follow Islamic values and principles. In fact, the politics in Kashmir, right from the beginning, has been deeply steeped in communal-mindedness. The terrorism that has plagued Kashmir is the end-product of the religion-based, defiant and uncompromising politics practised by noted leaders like Sheikh Abdullah, Sadiq, Gulshah and Farukh Abdullah.

The increasing fanaticism in Kashmir can not just be understood from a political perspective. It has to be viewed in the light of the Muslim mindset sweeping across the world. The religious fanaticism present in Kashmir is part of the global extremism which cherishes the political ambition of establishing '*Darul Islam*' in the entire world. The statement of Shabir Shah, Chairman of the Peoples' League and Democratic Freedom Party which has inspired the separatism in Kashmir, adequately dwells upon the aims and objectives of the widespread terrorism in Kashmir –

“The adversaries of Islam are uniting on every front to thwart its mission. The rule over Kashmir is one such example. But now, enthused and guided by Islam, the Kashmiri nation has woken up. The Sun of Islamic revolution is on the rise. The children of Faith (Faith in Quran and Hazrat Mohammad) must come forward and fight for freedom from the Indian sway.”

The Kashmir problem, too, is only the Kashmir edition of the Islamic mindset. It is the same fad which succeeded in breaking the nation into two parts in 1947. It draws one to a logical inference that every part of the country which becomes Muslim-majority region will get separated from India. The process of change-over from *Darul Herb* to *Darul Islam* is propping up a massive conspiracy which gradually but obviously is tightening its coil around other parts of the country too.

The most regrettable aspect is that during the last 63 years, no government at the centre has taken a determined and firm step to

solve the Kashmir problem. The Congress or congress-led governments kept playing their political chess on the Kashmir issue, taking all the decisions and making moves, agreements and dialogues solely on the basis of vote bank. Even the grant of economic packages for the state was influenced by religion and regionalism. Same feeble and frail approach was adopted by the BJP government while dealing with Kashmir. The compulsion of coalition and lack of absolute majority in parliament prevented the BJP-led government from taking a decisive and resolute stance on any issue of national importance. Though BJP had a firm stand on abolishing the special status given to the state of Jammu & Kashmir to bring it at par with the rest of the states but it failed to muster up adequate majority to get the move through in the parliament. Though majority of the people believe that the Article 370 has given impetus to the separatism in the state and thus need to be scrapped. But, sadly, the national consensus on this critical issue has not yet been formed.

Trifurcation of Jammu & Kashmir

It has been proposed by certain people, that, to find a solution to the Kashmir problem, the state of Jammu & Kashmir may be divided into three different states viz. Jammu, Kashmir and Union Territory of Ladakh. Though various organisations and groups from Jammu region have supported the demand for a separate Jammu state, but it is Jammu Mukti Morcha (JMM) which has spearheaded a movement for the said demand. The founder and chief of JMM, set up in March, 1990, Dr. Virendra Gupta believes that the division of the state of Jammu & Kashmir into two separate states is the only way-out to eliminate the discrimination and unjust treatment meted out to Jammu and Ladakh regions in various kinds – political, economic, social and religious. Likewise, the gross discrimination and prejudice against the people of Ladakh could be stopped by forming a Union Territory of Leh-Ladakh.

The entire region between the the river Ravi and Pir Panjal mountain which was part of the Jammu region on 15 August, 1947, should be merged with Jammu state. JMM and several other groups are of the firm opinion that in order to maintain and encourage the patriotic spirit of the people of Jammu, their valour and nationalist character and on the other hand, to contain and control the rising separatism, treason and communal fanaticism in Kashmir, the only remedy lies in division of the state into two separate political entities. It will also incapacitate the article 370 which has served as the breeding ground of separatism, terrorism and communal fanaticism in Jammu & Kashmir. By this act, the anti-India frenzy prevailing in Kashmir will cave in, religious fundamentalism tainting the politics will subside and the regional discrimination will also come to an end.

With the formation of a separate state of Jammu, the Pakistan-sponsored intrusion will be substantially controlled. The valiant and patriotic people of Jammu region have the vigour and valour to thwart the nefarious designs of Pakistani conspirators. In this scenario, the Indian government can concentrate and organise its strategy in curbing the separatism in Kashmir. In this regard, the people of Jammu region will join and extend their fullest and wholehearted support to the Indian security forces and the government. The move will also usher in a period of real independence and opportunities for the people of Jammu who have been subjected to blatant discrimination and bias for so long.

JMM and other like-minded leaders who support creation of a separate state of Jammu believe that Kashmir is a national issue and hence should be solved with a national outlook and perspective. It is grossly unfair and unjust to make Jammu and Ladakh as scapegoat, perennially, in the name of national security. It is the collective responsibility of the entire nation to fight the forces of separatism and treason in any part of the country.

The supporters of the above formula are of the firm opinion that the discrimination against the people of Jammu, caused by the biased conduct of the Union and state government and their policy of appeasement of a particular community is the root cause of the demand for a separate state of Jammu.

Three Options

There is urgent need to examine the problem of Kashmir in greater depth. A detailed analysis of the Kashmir problem and various factors such as bogus claim of Pakistan over Kashmir, complete and final accession of Kashmir to India, objectives of the terrorists and separatists in Kashmir, intrigue of making Kashmir a region devoid of Hindus, disproportionately large expenditure on the security and development of Kashmir, consensual decision and approval of the Indian Parliament in respect of Kashmir's accession to India, is quite essential. There are 3 options to resolve the problem -

1. Kashmir may be handed over to Pakistan, or
2. Kashmir to be made an Independent country, or
3. By abolishing Article 370, Jammu & Kashmir may be treated at par with the other states.

The historical events of the last 63 years make it very clear that except the above there are no other ways to settle the Kashmir issue. While choosing a solution, it is quite essential and imperative to rise above vested interests and give due care and consideration to certain vital factors as the security of Kashmir, welfare and growth of all religions, peaceful present and secured future for all the people in the state.

Accession to Pakistan

As a matter of fact, our Kashmiri brethren would never opt to merge with Pakistan. The internal problems in Pakistan are much grave and dreadful. The very *Bhasmasur* of terrorism (meaning

terrorist organisations) fostered and reared by Pakistan is now out to devour the creator itself. Ever since independence and partition, Pakistan, as a nation, has always been facing political instability and bad governance. Largely ruled by the military dictators, marred by the politics of intrigue and conspiracy, it has never provided a peaceful and harmonious environment to its people. The democracy has always eluded Pakistan and worse, even the governments elected by the people were overthrown by the military generals. Pakistan now finds itself in the grip of certain extremely menacing conditions such as poverty, starvation, unemployment, terrorism, political chaos and military domination by USA and China. These circumstances will never allow its citizens especially the people of Kashmir to breathe freely and see their Kashmiriats thrive. Judging by the circumstances and history, it is quite logical to infer that accession of Kashmir to Pakistan, an eternally troubled state, will summon disaster for Kashmir. The Kashmiri people will be totally deprived of the huge benefits, rights and largesse of the vast opportunities and amenities now made available to them by the union government and state government of Jammu & Kashmir. The accession to Pakistan, in a way, will prove disastrous for the people of Jammu & Kashmir.

Kashmir- As an Independent Nation

If the protagonists of this option, that is, separatist groups and terrorist outfits, shedding their bias towards non-Muslims, religious bigotry and Islamic fanaticism, analyse in a composed manner, they will see certain grave realities. If Kashmir attains independence and becomes a separate nation, the people of Ladakh and Jammu will never opt to merge in this nation. The use of force in this regard will lead to large scale public revolt and unrest which might make the situation alarmingly serious jeopardising the very survival and security of Kashmir. The new Kashmiri nation surrounded by China, Pakistan, Afghanistan and India, will be precariously placed at the

mercy of its neighbours.

Will a separate Kashmiri nation, in the absence of generous political, economic and religious support from India survive and sail independently ? How will it defend against the Pakistani aggression which Indian forces fought and defeated four times in the past to save Kashmir ? Will it be able to instal a formidable and tenable infrastructure on its own in terms of armed forces, modern defence equipments, communication and efficient industrial establishments which can adequately match the nuclear fire power-based military might of China, India and Pakistan. A balanced examination of all these factors will indicate that a defenceless, toothless and frail nation like Kashmir would be an easy prey for its neighbours viz. China and Pakistan. A nation can not survive on the strength of tourism, natural resources and warehouse of dry fruits.

Indian Kashmir

It is a universal fact that the Kashmiri cultural heritage, economic affluence, marvellous artistic treasure, world class tourism and even the Islamic rules and rituals can survive only in the safe environ of India. It is globally believed that for the survival of Islam India is the safest place in the world. It has the unique distinction of being a nation of people who, by virtue of their all-embracing nobility and cultural magnanimity, pay respect and provide security to everyone irrespective of caste, creed or colour. And Kashmir, needless to say, is the venerated place of origin of the Indian culture.

The present Muslim citizens of Kashmir are also descendants of the same great saints, warriors, scholars and victorious kings who spread winsome culture in different parts of the world. Both Hindus and Muslims having the same blood, are the descendants of the same ancestors. The Muslims have the same rights as Hindus on the civilization, culture and glorious history of this country. With different forms of worship and religion followed by the descendants,

their ancestors do not change. Therefore, the solution to the Kashmir problem can be found only on the firm basis of the cultural nationalism and common and shared legacy of both Hindus and Muslims.

Dangerous Consequences of Autonomy

It will be quite pertinent to review the political circumstances prevailing in the state of Jammu & Kashmir in 1952. Maharaja Hari Singh of Kashmir approved accession of the state to India on 26 October, 1947. Nehruji ordered the Maharaja to leave Kashmir and hand over the reins of the state to Sheikh Abdullah which the Maharaja complied. Sheikh Abdullah was made the *Vazir-e-Azam* (Chief Minister) of the state and Dr. Karan Singh, the *Sadr-e-Riyasat* (President). The flag adopted for Jammu & Kashmir was the one showing plough, moon and stars with green colour and not the Indian Tricolour. A permit system was made applicable in the state requiring Indians from other parts of the country to seek permission for entering the state. The state was empowered to make its own constitution. The President of India had no right to issue any ordinance relating to the state. The High Court of the state was kept outside the purview and jurisdiction of the Supreme Court.

The Election Commissioner had no control over the state of Jammu & Kashmir. By including Article 370 in the Indian constitution, special status was awarded to Jammu & Kashmir. In the garb of various political facilities and provisions and inspired by his own communal mindset, *Wazir-e-Azam* Sheikh Abdullah started hatching conspiracies to make Kashmir independent of India's control. Against this misdemeanour of Sheikh Abdullah, a massive movement called Praja Parishad was launched. Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, one of the Ministers in Pt. Nehru's cabinet resigned from the cabinet and led this movement. He entered Kashmir without the permit, was arrested, jailed and later died

under mysterious circumstances. Sheikh Abdullah, whose misdeeds were fully exposed, was arrested. As a result, the amendments for complete merger of Kashmir with India were carried out. This briefly sums up the conditions prevailing before 1952 which has been named as 'Autonomy' by the National Conference.

Since 1953, the Indian government, by carrying out various constitutional amendments, has granted, in line with other states, a large number of political and economic facilities to the state. As the constitution assembly of Jammu & Kashmir approved the accession of the state to India on 14 February, 1954, the union government, by passing 7th constitutional amendment in 1956, made the state of Jammu & Kashmir as an inseparable part of India. Till now this state was placed in category 'B'. If the people in power, in order to consolidate their vote bank, accede to the National Conference's demand of 'Autonomy' the separation of the state from Indian union will not be far behind, as the 7th constitutional amendment will stand abrogated. Consequently, all the Presidential ordinances, constitutional amendments, rights and prerogatives of the Parliament and jurisdiction of the Supreme Court will become ineffective.

As a corollary, the innumerable ramifications and repercussions that the 'Autonomy' of Kashmir will bring in its wake, would be a great setback for any patriotic and loyal citizen. The state of Jammu & Kashmir has sweeping majority of a particular community and it is quite irrefutably conclusive that it will influence the working of the government and various vital organs of governance including judiciary. For instance, when the empowerment of Supreme court, granted in 1960, over the High Court of the state ceases, the people of the state will have no choice except compliance with its judgments. The provision of President's rule in the state could be made applicable in 1964, under the articles 356 and 357 of the constitution. Let us imagine a scenario when the Government loses this constitutional right and there is dire need and urgency for

imposition of President's rule in the state. It is widely known that the entire administrative machinery of the state is packed with pro-Pakistan elements. Pakistan's undeclared war has continued for decades which can spark off into a full-fledged and declared war any moment. How and who will stop the government and people of Kashmir from raising a rebellion? How will our security forces fight and defend? The most precarious situation will emerge when in the absence of the union government's control, the government of Kashmir, the judiciary and the administration rise in revolt. Even today, all the foremost institutions of governance have large number of moles supporting terrorism and separatism who can go to any extent to harm India. The article 370 which has granted the constitutional recognition to this separatism, has enabled and emboldened the anti-India separatist elements to hold complete sway over the administration. As at present, the government of India, by posting certain officers from Indian Administrative Services, is barely managing to keep things under control. The state of Jammu & Kashmir was brought under the purview of the All-India Administrative Services by an amendment in article 312 of the Indian constitution in 1958.

The restoration of the situation prevailing in 1952 will automatically close all the channels for keeping Jammu & Kashmir as an inseparable part of India. The Shimla Agreement which is often cited by the government of India for holding talks with Pakistan was signed in 1972. The people-in-majority of both Pakistan and Kashmir will, in utter disregard of this agreement, will try to dig up the old issue of referendum. In the Shimla Agreement itself, the line of 'cease-fire' was accepted as the 'line of control' which several separatist groups want to make the international border so that India loses its right, principally and legally, on the area under Pakistan's illegitimate control i.e. Pak-occupied Kashmir (PoK).

On March 30, 1965, in terms of Article 249 of the Indian

constitution, the union government acquired power pertaining to any matter in the State list of Jammu & Kashmir, in line with other states. Normally, the union government is empowered to take decision in respect of most of the laws on political, judicial and economic matters. It is all the more crucial and imperative in a state like Jammu & Kashmir. Equipped with these powers only, the union government could accomplish certain important tasks, such as setting up of facilities for dalit /weaker sections, Vaishno Devi Trust, Waqf Board, process of Census, election etc. The Indian government allocates huge grants and economic packages for Jammu & Kashmir which would eventually stop in case the situation prevailing in 1952 is restored.

Similarly, on February 25, 1975, under an agreement signed by the then Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi and Sheikh Abdullah, the state of Jammu & Kashmir was constitutionally made a part of the Indian union. The article 2 of this agreement states - "Though ordinarily, the state is vested with powers to frame laws, yet the Union Parliament will have the powers to legislate laws on all such matters as violation, posing challenge or negation of sovereignty, directly or indirectly, acts of separation of any part of the state or any state from the union, or for containing activities causing insult or indignation to Indian constitution, Indian flag and National Anthem." It is clear that restoration of the status of 1952 will nullify the crucial agreement of 1975. That would unambiguously mean that in the event of all the above happenings or mishappenings, the position of Indian government with no authority, will be extremely grim.

Basis of Resolution

Before attempting to find out a solution, it is advisable and appropriate to keep into consideration the nature and cause of the Kashmir problem. This book 'Jammu & Kashmir- A State in Turbulence' vividly focusses on these aspects. The Kashmir problem

is not merely a political one, it is outcome of the ideological obsession of the Muslim society which directly affects the security of the Indian nation. It is, therefore, quite logical to believe that any agreement concluded on the basis of talks with the fundamentalist leaders of a single community would be an extremely risky proposition for the integrity of the country. The forces which negate and disregard the most sublime symbols of our nation viz. the Indian constitution, parliament, national flag and territorial integrity will never come to an agreement which undermines their separatist plans and ploys.

While addressing the complex problem of Kashmir, special attention must be given to some of the urgent and pressing issues such as national security, discrimination against the people of Jammu and Ladakh, safe and honorable return of displaced Kashmiri Pandits, redressal of the problems faced by the Hindu refugees migrated from PoK and West Panjab (Pakistan), review of the ramifications of Article 370 providing special status to Jammu & Kashmir, armed intrusion by Pakistani terrorists, concern for the brave personnel of Indian security forces fighting terrorism and harmony among the followers of different faiths and religions in Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh.

The area and population of the regions of Jammu and Ladakh is three times the Kashmir valley. Therefore, before taking any decision to solve the issue, the consent of the people of the two regions must and necessarily be obtained. Any solution found on the basis of talks with only one group of people of Kashmir valley, thus completely ignoring the representatives of Jammu and Ladakh regions viz. Gujjars, Dogras, Bakkarwals, Bhadrawahis, Gaddis as also Kashmiri Pandits and refugees from Pakistan, will vitiate the unity and harmony of the entire state of Jammu & Kashmir. Unfortunately, the party running the affairs of the state belong to only one particular community and the party ruling the government

at the centre, keeping in view the vote bank, extends full support to the party ruling the state.

It may be noted that since 1948 the reins of power in the state of Jammu & Kashmir have been vested with a single family consisting of Sheikh Abdullah, Farukh Abdullah, Gulshah and Omar Abdullah. On the other hand, the power at the centre, barring a few exceptions, has also remained with a particular dynasty consisting of Pt. Nehru, Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi.

The present government, though headed by Dr. Manmohan Singh, is operated as per direction and control of Sonia Gandhi, which is only the latest version of dominance of Nehru clan. As a matter of fact, Jammu & Kashmir has been beleaguered and besieged by the anti-national alliance between two major political families known for their lust for power, ancestral political legacy and vote-bank politics. Therefore, the only solution for the Kashmir problem lies in evolving a nationalist plan devoid of vote bank and appeasement politics. Solutions like 'Autonomy' i.e. little less than independence, will pave way for dismemberment of Kashmir from India. This will certainly be a huge victory for Pakistan and Pak-supported and sponsored separatists operating in Kashmir.

All the national level parties, on the one hand, will have to rise above vested and selfish interests, caste and community based vote bank politics and on the other, the ruling party at the centre, shedding its indecisive stance will have to act with firmness and in national interest to solve the problem. The government will have to stop behaving with a defeatist attitude in its foreign policy, as reflected in some of the instances, like keeping silent over Pakistan's repeated attempts to accuse India over Kashmir issue at international forum, allowing the Huriyat leader Omar Farukh to participate in the meeting of Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC) as a representative of Kashmir, not reacting to the alleged interview of an Arabic citizen appointed as the Ambassador of Kashmir by

OIC, not taking up vociferously the issue of Pak-sponsored terrorism in Kashmir in the bi-lateral talks with Pakistan and sluggish response to Pakistan's repeated accusation against India for the uprising in Baluchistan.

In every bilateral talk and agreement with Pakistan regarding trade, water-sharing, cultural and economic matters, the crucial issues of cross-border infiltration and terrorism, ISI's role in fomenting violence must be taken up assertively and strongly. In fact, the track record shows that our successive governments have not dealt with Pakistan with the requisite resolve and firmness. Unless we adopt an extremely straightforward, undaunted and tough attitude while dealing with Pakistan, confirming our unquestionable claim over Kashmir, the problem of Kashmir will keep haunting us for ever.

One Way One Solution

The state of Jammu & Kashmir may be brought at par with other states by scrapping Article 370 of the Indian constitution and formation of a Joint Kashmir under the Indian constitution, including the PoK i.e part of Kashmir under Pakistan's illegal, unauthorised and unconstitutional occupation, in which Hindus and Muslims can live together harmoniously under the common cultural legacy.

With the dissolution of article 370, the separate constitution and flag of Kashmir will lose its entity. The termination of special status given to the state will fizzle out the base of separatism and our national mainstream will get stronger. The patriotic people, neglected and ignored hitherto, will have an opportunity to play a significant role in protecting the border state from anti-india forces.

Likewise, based on the size of population and area, when the people of Jammu and Ladakh are given due representation in state assembly, state council, parliament and other constitutional institutions and commissions, the dismal spell of discriminatory politics will end.

The complete accession of the entire Jammu & Kashmir has already taken place on a perpetual basis on October 27, 1947, which has been accepted by the constitution assembly elected by the people of Jammu & Kashmir. Pakistan has, through deceitful and illegal means, acquired one-third of the Kashmir region. It is, thus, within the legal rights of India to wrest back this territory from Pakistan through military action. This task needs to be accomplished without loss of time. With the Indo-Pak Shimla Agreement signed in 1972 coming into effect, the UN Security Council's jurisdiction and notion of self-determination on Kashmir loses any legal status, whatsoever.

In accordance with the resolution passed by the parliament on February 22, 1994 India must make it categorically clear to the anti-India separatist elements operating in Kashmir and their mentors in Pakistan that besides the diplomatic channels we will not hesitate to resort to the use of force to deal with the cross-border terrorism.

We must, within the International law, convention and requirement as also with the consent of the world community, initiate armed action against the terrorist training camps operating in Pakistan.

The government must take steps to arrange for the safe and honourable return of all the displaced Hindus back home. In this respect, the Muslims of Kashmir have a significant role to play. They should take the initiative and come forward to not only guarantee the safety of their Hindu brethren but also win their hearts with concern and compassion.

Also, the patriotic Hindu and Muslim scholars, social, religious and nationalist leaders, authors and journalists must try and convince the youth engaged in bloodshed in the name of *Jihad* to shun violence and understand the true character of *Kashmiriat* and return to the national mainstream. Similarly, the political parties should drop their politics of vote-bank and appeasement which is

harming the nation and make earnest efforts to usher in a wave of nationalism, patriotism and humanity.

To espouse the Hindu-Muslim unity and harmony, the entire Indian nation will have to proclaim in one voice that Kashmir and *Kashmiriat*, the common legacy of both Hindus and Muslims is an integral part of India. No power on earth can repudiate this fact. The day when the Indian government, all political, social and religious organisations and groups come together and accept the reality of Kashmir, it will pave way for a national consensus on Kashmir and with this, the historical blunders committed by our first Prime Minister Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru and his Congress party on Kashmir, will stand redeemed and also the supreme sacrifice made by Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee and the efforts of Shri Guruji will prove meaningful.



I saw Shri Guruji entering 'Karan Mahal'



In 1948, when Maharaja Hari Singh was King of Jammu & Kashmir, I was his A.D.C. The King's Court was in Kashmir. When India achieved independence on August 15, 1947, the princely states acceded to the Indian nation. The Maharaja of Jammu & Kashmir too received the proposal of accession. Pakistan was planning to keep Jammu & Kashmir under its illegal control. They were preparing to launch a tribal attack against Kashmir and Maharaja took some time to decide that for him accession to India was a better option.

It was in 1947, though I do not remember the date correctly. I saw a gentleman entering the 'Karan Mahal' in his personal vehicle. He had come to meet the Maharaja. We came to know later that he was Shri Madhavrao Sadashivrao Golwalkar, the Sarsanghchalak of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, popularly known as Shri Guruji. I saw Shri Guruji next in a programme at Jammu. I have been, indeed, impressed by his personality.

During their meeting in Karan Mahal what transpired between Shri Guruji and Maharaja is not known, but it is clear that they had fairly exhaustive discussion.

- Capt. Diwan Singh
A.D.C to Maharaja Hari Singh

The Accession of J&K State and Maharaja Hari Singh

- Dr. D.C. Sharma

Sardar Patel, the iron man of India, who achieved the integration of almost all the princely states with India, wanted an early accession of the State of Jammu and Kashmir as well. He got a person of his choice Mehar Chand Mahajan, appointed as the Prime Minister of the State. So, in order to wean away the influence of Ram Chandra Kak over the Maharaja, Sardar Patel wanted to remove him from the post of Prime Minister. The second step Sardar Patel took was engaging Guru Golwalkar, the then RSS Chief with a request to press upon Maharaja Hari Singh to join the Indian dominion. Air travel was arranged for Gururji from Delhi to Srinagar by the Home Ministry of India. In the opinion of Sardar Patel, Guru Golwalkar was very close to the Maharaja and commanded respect in the ruling family. However, efforts by certain RSS men from Jammu and Kashmir State and Punjab had already been made to persuade the Maharaja to accede to the Indian Union. In 1947, Pt. Prem Nath Dogra was the district organiser of RSS in Jammu. He met Maharaja Hari Singh and submitted to him a memorandum on behalf of the citizens of Jammu requesting him to join the Indian

Union under the powers vested in him by the Indian Independence Act of 1947. *The Standstill Agreement* with Pakistan by the Maharaja was not liked by the RSS and pro-India lobby of the State. Badri Nath, the then RSS organiser in Punjab, who was very well connected with Maharaja Hari Singh rushed to Srinagar by air, met the Maharaja and requested him to join the Indian Dominion at the earliest, but in vain.

Guru Golwalkar reached Srinagar on Oct. 17, 1947. He met Maharaja Hari Singh in his palace the next day. In the meeting which took place between the two, 16-year old Prince Karan Singh was also present. The fourth person who attended this meeting was Mehar Chand Mahajan. Gururji apprised the Maharaja of the purpose of his visit. After some discussion, the Maharaja said—"My state is totally dependent on Pakistan because all the communications of my state are with the Indian Sub-continent are through the cities of Sialkot and Rawalpindi which are both in Pakistan. For me, the only aerodrome is of Lahore. What kind of relations I can have with Indians?" Gururji then told the Maharaja—"You are a Hindu Raja. To accede to Pakistan means your Hindu subjects will have to struggle for their existence. It is correct that at present there is no rail, road and air link with India but within a short time these will be available to your state. It is in your interest as well as in the interest of your state that you should join the Indian Union." Meanwhile, Mehar Chand Mahajan also intervened in the talk and pleaded with the Maharaja to accede to India. At the end of the meeting the Maharaja presented to Gururji a Pashmina shawl.

No doubt, the advice of the Gururji was not acted upon by the Maharaja immediately but certainly, it had changed his rigid thinking to remain independent or join Pakistan. All this shows that the Government of India was very much interested in the accession of the state to India inspite of the fact that the Prime Minister of India

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was personally hostile to Maharaja Hari Singh who was naturally apprehensive of the attitude of the Indian National Congress.

Extracts from **“Maharaja Hari Singh”**

(1895-1961)

Edited by Prof. M.L. Kapur

Formerly Head of the History Department

Jammu University, Jammu

(P. 135-136)



In Saving Kashmir

- H.V. Seshadri

Immediately thereafter, a most serious challenge to the freedom and integrity of Independent Bharat was posed in Kashmir.

Briefly told, the Declaration of 3rd June, 1947 had left all the princely rulers of undivided Bharat free to join either Bharat or Pakistan or even remain independent. However, Hari Singh, the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir was in an awful fix. The Maharaja, a devout and patriotic Hindu, could not think of joining Pakistan. In view of the marked Muslim majority in the State, he felt hesitant to straightaway join Bharat either. Mountbatten specially flew to Kashmir in the third week of June in a bid to persuade the Maharaja to join Pakistan. The Maharaja, however, resisted the pressure and as a stop-gap arrangement executed a 'Stand-Still Agreement' with Pakistan and wanted to have a similar link with Bharat. But the Indian leaders would not consent to that proposal. Inside the State itself, the Muslim Conference began pressing the Maharaja to opt for Pakistan. R.C.Kak, the then Prime Minister of Kashmir, however, advised him to remain independent.

Amidst these conflicting pulls, the Sangh leaders in the State began exerting every possible influence to persuade the Maharaja

to declare his accession to Bharat before the deadline of 15th August 1947. The State Sanghachalak, Pandit Prem Nath Dogra, submitted several memoranda and followed them up with personal interviews with the Maharaja. Several social and political organisations in the province were also persuaded to pass resolutions urging the Maharaja to join Bharat without delay. Thousands of telegrams were sent to him from all parts of Kashmir and other neighbouring states. Badrinathji, Sanghchalak of Punjab whom the Maharaja held in high esteem, hastened to Srinagar to meet and advise him.

However, forces inimical to Bharat would not let the Maharaja have his way. When 14th August came, the postal authorities in Srinagar hoisted the Pakistani flag on their office because the post offices within the State came under Sialkot circle which now formed part of Pakistan. Promptly, the Sangh swayamsevaks and sympathisers saw to it that the postal authorities pulled down the Pakistani flag. On the next day, the 15th of August, the Indian Tricolour flew over most of the houses and shops in Srinagar. The flags had been prepared in hundreds in the Sangh Karyalaya and distributed to the people.

In the meanwhile, the pro-Pakistani elements inside Kashmir intensified their propaganda to pressurise the Maharaja to join Pakistan. Large-scale smuggling of arms into the State to foment internal rebellion was on. Economic blockade from outside was clamped by Pakistan. The Sangh leaders were the first to realise the gravity of the situation and again they sent memoranda to the Maharaja. A Sangh swayamsevak in the guise of a Muslim had wormed himself into the camp of the Muslim personnel of the State's Armed Forces at Srinagar and secured detailed plans of the projected Pakistani invasion. A prominent Sangh worker of Kashmir personally informed the Commander of the State Forces about the plan and the impending tragedy. Later developments

tallied word to word with the details of that plan.

At the diplomatic level at the Centre too, Sangh had made certain moves in the crucial mid-October days. 'Sardar Patel, knowing the mind of the Maharaja, had pitched upon Shri Guruji to talk to him. Shri Guruji, he knew, commanded the implicit confidence of the Maharaja. Shri Guruji flew to Srinagar on 17th October 1947. He brought home to the Maharaja the futility of harbouring an idea of retaining Kashmir as an independent kingdom and advised him to join Bharat straightaway. Finally, the Maharaja expressed his readiness to sign the Instrument of Accession to Bharat. Shri Guruji returned to New Delhi on 19th October and reported to Sardar Patel about the Maharaja's readiness to accede to Bharat.

The sudden and massive invasion of Kashmir on 23rd October by Pakistani tribesmen, the SOS to Delhi by the Maharaja for help, agreeing to the accession of the State to Bharat and the flying of Indian troops to save Kashmir-all these followed in lightening succession.

'RSS - A Vision in Action'

Jagran Prakashan

Bangalore, India

(P. 25, 26, 27)



Accession of Kashmir-Sangh's Efforts

- Manik Chandra Vajpayee

The Sangh had tried, from the very beginning, for the accession of Jammu & Kashmir to India, and that too as early as possible. At first, it exposed Kak, Prime Minister of the state, who was instigating the Maharaja to dream of an independent Kashmir. It held meetings and demonstrations at various places, sent delegations to the Maharaja and placed before him solid evidence of Kak's treachery. It got him dismissed and then made multi-dimensional efforts to persuade the Maharaja for accession. It launched a mass awakening campaign and then carried out a signature campaign in the Jammu region in support of accession. Under the leadership of Jammu Sanghchalak Pt. Prem Nath Dogra the signed memorandum was submitted to the Maharaja and he was urged to accede to India without harbouring any doubts in his mind, as the good of the state and his own good lay in his doing so.

Rai Bahadur Badridas was Punjab Prant Sanghchalak. He was a well-known lawyer and had special influence on the Maharaja. In important legal matters he represented the Maharaja in court. He came down to Srinagar in September to see the Maharaja and

forcefully urged him to accede.

A leading Dewan of the Maharaja was the father-in-law of UP Sanghchalak Barrister Narendrajit Singh. In this way, he too, was close to the Maharaja and he too tried to influence him.

All these efforts were made at the instance of Sarsanghchalak Shri Guruji, because the Sangh and every pro-Indian section of the Society felt that in all circumstances the State of Jammu & Kashmir should remain with India. So all such elements were making these efforts. Senior workers like Balraj Madhok who had close contacts with the Maharaja, were constantly trying to dispel the doubts in his mind. They acquainted him with the dangerous intentions of Pakistan, and even kept him informed about Pakistan's invasion plan and of the conspiracy of Muslim officers and men of the State's army to desert and go over to the Pakistani side at the time of the invasion.

Accepting the arguments of the Sangh and other pro-India sections the Maharaja sent his own proposal for merger. For this purpose he sent Harnam Singh as his envoy to Delhi, but the mission failed because of Nehru's antagonism. The Maharaja made the final effort during October 10-13, 1947. Harnam Singh was again sent to Delhi, but he failed.

Finally, It was decided that Shri Guruji should go to Srinagar and meet the Maharaja to persuade him. Accordingly, he reached Srinagar by plane on October 17, 1947. He was put up to stay with Barr. Narendrajit Singh's in-laws. He, too, had accompanied Guruji. In addition, Delhi Prant Pracharak Vasantrao Oak was with him and Punjab Prant Pracharak Madhavrao Muley was there. Pracharak Harish Bhanot was entrusted the responsibility of Shri Guruji's security. Bhanot said, on September 26, that he was in Jalandhar, where he was informed that Guruji was to travel to Srinagar. So, he reached there in the first week of October. Jammu & Kashmir Vibhag Pracharak Jagdish Abrol was also sent a wire

and called.

The next day, that is, on October 18, Shri Guruji arrived at Karan Mahal, the Maharaja's residence, by car. Both the Maharaja and Maharani had great respect for Guruji. The Maharaja had great faith in the Sangh and he was confident that in times of danger swayamsevak of the Sangh would help protect the State. So, Maharaja Hari Singh and Maharani Tara were personally present at the gate to receive Guruji.

No proper account of what transpired is available, as Guruji did not tell anybody anything in detail. However that they were hopeful was proved by the fact that while seeing Shri Guruji off, the Maharaja said he would certainly consider his suggestion.

While returning the next day, October 19, Guruji asked prominent Sangh office-bearers to keep in constant touch with the Maharaja and keep assuring him of the Sangh's full cooperation so that he may not feel alone and depressed. He said the talks were cordial and there was a ray of hope, yet nothing definite could be said.

Sardar Patel knew that Shri Guruji had considerable influence on the Maharaja and the latter had respect for Guruji and the Sangh. He cooperated with Guruji on this visit. Shri Guruji also acquainted the Sardar with the Maharaja's positive attitude. Fortunately, by this time Shri Mehar Chand Mahajan had assumed charge as Prime Minister of Jammu & Kashmir. He too was a forceful advocate of Kashmir's merger with India and had great respect for Guruji. He was well aware of what swayamsevak had done in Punjab to protect the society. He, too, cooperated. He kept telling the Maharaja that Shri Guruji had given the right advice.

Because of this meeting and also other factors, the Maharaja finally decided to accede and the instrument of accession was signed on 20th October. So, it can be said without hesitation that Sangh

swayamsevaks and especially Shri Guruji played a prominent role in persuading the Maharaja. It can also be said that the meeting with Guruji was decisive in the Maharaja's decision to accede, because it was after this meeting that the process of accession got going. The invasion by Pakistan was the final stamp on the decision.

(Based on memoirs of Balraj Madhok, Harish Bhanot,
Vasantryao Oak, Jagdish Abrol, Madhavrao Muley and
Abasaheb Thatte.)

'Partition Days - The Fiery Saga of RSS'

(P. 256 to 260)



Letter from Maharaja Hari Singh to Sardar Patel

As per "Sardar Patel's correspondence (Part-I)," Maharaja Hari Singh wrote a detailed letter to Sardar Patel on January 31, 1948 narrating his tale of woes. The Letter is reproduced below:-

"The Indian troops arrived in the valley on October 27 when the entire district of Mirpur and three-fourth of Poonch was under our control. Till then, we had lost possession of district Muzaffrabad and some parts of Poonch. After the re-capture of Baramula and Uri there is relative calm. Two months have passed and the Indian forces are still in Uri. They tried to reach Poonch and got there with great difficulty incurring heavy losses. The road link was eventually lost. The security forces of Kashmir held on to the area of Poonch but subsequently we had to withdraw and except the town we lost the entire region. There are about 40,000 people besieged in Poonch with 4 battalions (3- state and 1-Indian) on guard. The situation is, by no means, satisfactory. I may mention that in the August disturbances, with the two battalions of state troops, we got the entire Poonch jagir under our control. Peace was restored and whole of the revenue was realised and the administration was working normal. It was only in the second week of October that the disturbance erupted again. Our forces fought

hard to defend successfully till the end of December. But since no help was provided they had to withdraw from Poonch."

Maharaja Hari Singh states further - "In district Mirpur, till the arrival of Indian armed forces, we had under our control the territory along the Jhelum and Mangla banks but in the last two months we have lost Mangla, Alibeg, Gurudwara, towns of Mirpur, Bhimbar, Dewa Batala, Chhamb and the entire territory around Naushehra. More recently, we have lost possession of Jhangad, the main tract of Mirpur and Kotli."

"These reversals are a matter of great disparagement to our forces. So far they have not succeeded in taking away a single town. The people judge the security forces by the results and performance and not by their publicity and propaganda. The enemy attacks have increased on the Kathua-Sialkot border.

A number of villages have been burnt, people looted, the women abducted and murdered. This has led to large scale evacuation of people in the border areas with 70,000 -80,000 refugees arriving in the city of Jammu. Their farms, houses and properties have been destroyed. The situation is deteriorating fast with large number of people in the Jammu region too leaving their homes and heading for West Punjab."

"Despite having highly distinguished record of valour and bravery, the reputation of Indian army is in shreds. I was a member of the 'war cabinet' and travelled in the war zones during the great war. In gallantry, the Indian forces had their name written in the top echelons. But it is extremely painful to see the manner in which their image has suffered. There are people who believe that the fault lies not with the forces but the policy makers. It is observed that there were some basic errors in the strategic plan which caused the downfall. For instance, the task was assigned to inexperienced commanders who were new to the situation and required at least 15 years of war zone experience before leading such a sensitive

military operation. There can be numerous opinions but the depressing fact is that their name and fame has got a beating. Sardar Baldev Singh was here for a day. He had heard from the politicians, social leaders, me and my Prime Minister all that people had to say. He told me, in confidence, that he has given orders to take certain steps. I told him that without proper implementation and execution, orders carry little sense. When you had graciously spent two days with us here, a number of decisions were taken and your goodself had given certain instructions too. Since your departure nothing has been done and as I have already stated that attacks against us have been intensified, Pakistan's misdemeanour has been on the rise and each success has made them more audacious and brazen. They repeatedly indulge in looting, arson, abduction of women and cattle. Back in Pakistan they incite people to carry out their sinister attacks on our people. On the other hand, our morale has dipped sharply. Our people are totally demoralised and disheartened. The situation is so alarming that even a rumour of attack makes them flee from their homes. People in far flung villages are so panicky that on seeing fire from a distance they run for safety. As for Indian security forces, they do not leave their positions to fight gorillas and snipers. To their disadvantage, they do not have the back-up mobile units to assist in their operations. They are only assisted by some homeguards and weary and jaded soldiers of provincial army, who are totally inadequate to defend against groups of 500-600 fully armed and trained snipers. Last time, you had instructed to use gorillas in such operations and as per my knowledge, no gorilla force has arrived in the state so far....."

"Therefore, in the midst of these circumstances, my position, as a ruler, is extremely jittery. The anguished people of the state continue sending me telegrams asking for help. Our civil administration is in the hands of National Conference and military operations under the control of Indian Union. I have absolutely no

power, whatsoever, in civil or military matters. The armed forces of the state are under the direct command of Chief of Indian Army. As a result, I am a mute and distressed witness to this heartbreaking tragedy. Without an authority and to my utter discomfiture and embarrassment, I have to watch the gory incidents of abduction of women, killing and torture of innocent people. People approach me daily for aid, assistance and compensation presuming that I still have the reins of power. Now, with our military status being a matter of deep worry, refugees arriving in large number, Pakistani attacks intensifying unchallenged, you will kindly imagine my sagging morale and helplessness."

Besides military situation, the reference to United Nations is a matter of deep concern and uncertainty not only for me but people at large- Hindus, Sikhs and members of National Conference. There is widespread apprehension among the people that UN Security Council might give an unfavourable verdict mandating accession of Kashmir to Pakistan. This is compelling Hindus and Sikhs to leave the valley for safety as they fear that the UN mandate might bring back the ominous conditions like west Punjab. The leaders of National Conference also feel that accepting the UN decision will also cause them huge fiasco and disaster.

My position in this respect, is quite precarious and calamitous. As you are aware, I always extended full support to the Indian Union and decided to merge into it with the conviction that it will never let us feel low and will ensure safety of the state, my own and the royal family of Kashmir. This was the reason why I had accepted the Indian recommendation relating to the internal administration. If we had plans to merge with Pakistan, then there was no point or propriety, at all, in reshaping the internal administration as per Indian proposal. I have a feeling that the issue of accession or internal administration, with regard to the jurisdiction of the Security Council, is entirely different." The Indian union has

only sent a limited issue to the UN body to resolve which has been given unnecessary and unsolicited expanse as the Security council is contemplating on the subjects of aggression of one state against another, the internal issues of formation of interim governments and accession of Kashmir. It was a monumental blunder to approach the Security council and then agreeing to its exhaustive proposals. Withdrawing the referral from the UN India should have closed the matter."

Under the aforesaid circumstances, reflecting upon the issue afresh and dispassionately, my conscience repeatedly urges that I should withdraw the 'accession' to Indian union. India had accepted this arrangement as an interim measure and that if it can not recover our lost territories and under the UN mandate it might even be prepared to hand us over to Pakistan, then there is absolutely no justification or logic in merger or accession of the state with India. For the time being, if may be possible to have better terms and conditions from Pakistan. But that is immaterial as it would ultimately mean elimination of all Hindus, Sikhs and the royal dynasty. There is an alternative for me that I withdraw my proposal of accession to India which would finish the matter of reference to the UN straightaway. Because, after withdrawal of our 'accession', India will have no right or cause to continue the matter with UN. Consequently, the state of Kashmir will relapse into a position prevailing before accession. In those circumstances, the difficulty is that the Indian troops will have to operate as volunteers in the state. I am prepared to take over the command of my own forces and Indian army personally to help the state. I am prepared to lead my own and also Indian armed forces, if Indian Union agrees.

I Know my country much better than any of your generals will know it even during the next several months or years. I am prepared to guide and lead on the war front rather than merely watching from the fence. This is for you to decide which position India will

accept. I am tired of my present state and feel that it will be better to sacrifice my life fighting in the warfield than watching helplessly the heartbreaking misery of my people."

Another alternative that strikes me is that if I am unable to do anything for the people I should leave the state and go elsewhere so that they do not think that I can help them any more. For their woes, they can only blame the civil administration or Indian security forces who are the custodians of their security. Then the responsibility will squarely fall on either Indian nation or Sheikh Abdullah's administration. The accusation and criticism for not mitigating the public unrest will be directed at the people who are at the helm of affairs and not me. Undoubtedly, I can perceive that people will talk about me in the same vein as they did when I left Kashmir on the advice of Shri Menon. At that time, the people had said that I had run away from the state out of fear. Now they might say that I have abandoned them at this critical hour. But when one can not do anything even to avoid criticism, it is no use retaining that position. Yes, if I leave the state, I will have to take people into confidence and apprise them as to why I am doing so."

"The third option under the circumstances is military option — the Indian government must perform its duty effectively by making all-out efforts to thwart the Pakistani attacks. The snipers and rebels present in the state must be driven out. It requires firm resolve on behalf of the government to fight which it has failed to do so far. Three or four well-planned and well-executed armed battles will give a befitting blow to the enemy and redeem the situation for us, but delay in this regard can prove very costly. Strategically, Pakistan is better equipped against Kashmir than India. As the snow melts Pakistan will launch its fierce attack on all fronts, grabbing Ladakh in the initial strike, then increasing its raids in other parts of valley. With the borders coming under heavy fire, our armed forces with even double the troops will find it extremely tough to save the

situation. Whatever was achieved a month back can still be achieved. But, if the action is delayed or if situation remains static and inconclusive due to indecision and disagreement at UN forum, it can turn things horribly grave for us. Therefore, unless the Indian government shows the resolve and willpower to fight, I am open to choose from the above two options.”

Sardar Patel's Advice

In response to the above letter, Sardar Patel replied on February 9, 1948-

“I can fully imagine the agony and distress you are going through. I can assure you that I am, no less anxious about the situation and events in Kashmir, UN etc. But whatever the present scenario, there is absolutely no place for despair.”



Maharaja's Proposal of Accession to India

[Text of Letter dated October 26, 1947 From
Hari Singh, The Maharaja of Jammu & Kashmir to
Lord Mountbatten, Governor General of India.]

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

I have to inform your Excellency that a grave emergency has arisen in my State and request immediate assistance of your Government.

As your Excellency is aware the State of Jammu & Kashmir has not acceded to the Dominion of India or to Pakistan. Geographically, my State is contiguous to both the Dominions. It has vital economic and cultural links with both of them. Besides, my State has a common boundary with the Soviet Republic and China. In their external relations the Dominions of India and Pakistan can not ignore this fact.

I wanted to take time to decide to which Dominion I should accede, or whether it is not in the best interests of both the Dominions and my State to stand independent, of course with friendly and cordial relations with both.

I, accordingly, approached the Dominions of India and Pakistan

to enter into Standstill Agreement with my State. The Pakistan Government accepted this Agreement. The Dominion of India desired further discussions with representatives of my Government. I could not arrange this in view of the developments indicated below. In fact the Pakistan Government is operating Post and Telegraph system inside the State.

Though we have got a Standstill Agreement with the Pakistan Government but that Government permitted steady and increasing strangulation of supplies like food, salt and petrol to my State.

Infiltrators, bandits and solidiers in plain clothes armed with modern weapons have been allowed to infiltrate into the State at first in Poonch and then in Sialkot and finally in the area adjoining Hazara District on the Ramkot side. As a result, the limited number of troops at the disposal of the State had to be dispersed and thus had to face the enemy at multiple points simultaneously and it has become extremely difficult to stop the wanton destruction of life and property and incidents of looting. The Mahora Power Station which supplies the electric current to the whole of Srinagar has been burnt down. The number of women who have been kidnapped and raped makes my heart bleed. The wild and brutal forces thus unleashed on the State are marching on with the aim of capturing Srinagar, the summer capital of my Government, as first step to over-running the whole State.

The mass infiltration of tribesmen drawn from distant areas of the North-West Frontier coming regularly in trucks using Mansehra-Muzaffarabad Road and fully armed with modern weapons can not possibly be done without the knowledge and connivance of the provisional Government of the North-West Frontier Province and the Government of Pakistan. Despite the repeated requests made by my Government no attempt has been made to check these raiders or stop them from coming into my State. The Pakistan Radio even put out a story that a Provisional Government had

been set up in Kashmir. The people of my State both the Muslims and non-Muslims generally have taken no part at all.

With the conditions obtaining at present in my State and the great emergency of the situation as it exists, I have no option but to ask for help from the Indian Dominion. Naturally they cannot send the help asked for by me without my State acceding to the Dominion of India. I have accordingly decided to do so and I attach the Instrument of Accession for acceptance by your Government. The other alternative is to leave my State and my people to diabolical killers and beasts. On this basis no civilized Government can exist or be maintained. This alternative I will never allow to happen as long as I am Ruler of the State and I have life to defend my country.

I am also to inform your Excellency's Government that it is my intention to set up an interim Government urgently and ask Sheikh Abdullah to carry out the responsibilities in this emergency with my Prime Minister.

If my State has to be saved immediate assistance must be rushed to Srinagar. Mr. Menon is fully aware of the situation and he will explain to you, if further explanation is needed.

In haste and with kind regards,

The Palace, Jammu

26th October, 1947

Your sincerely,

Hari Singh



Instrument of Accession

(Instrument of Accession executed by Maharaja Hari Singh on October 26, 1947)

Whereas the Indian Independence Act, 1947, provides that as from the fifteenth day of August, 1947, there shall be set up an independent Dominion known as INDIA, and that the Government of India Act 1935, shall, with such omissions, additions, adaptations and modifications as the Governor General may, by order, specify, be applicable to the Dominion of India.

And whereas the Government of India Act, 1935, as so adapted by the Governor General, provides that an Indian State may accede to the Dominion of India by an Instrument of Accession executed by the Ruler thereof.

Now, therefore, I, Shriman Inder Mahinder Rajrajeswar Maharajadhiraj Shri Hari Singh, the King of Jammu & Kashmir and *Tibet adi Deshadhipati*, Ruler of Jammu & Kashmir State, in the exercise of my Sovereignty in and over my said State do hereby execute this Instrument of Accession, and

1. I hereby declare that I accede to the Dominion of India with the intent that the Governor General of India, the Dominion Legislature, the Federal Court and any other Dominion authority

established for the purposes of the Dominion shall by virtue of this Instrument of Accession but subject always to the terms thereof, and for the purposes only of the Dominion, exercise in relation to the State of Jammu & Kashmir (hereinafter referred to as "this State") such functions as may be vested in them by or under the Government of India Act, 1935, as in force in the Dominion of India, on the 15th day of August 1947, (which Act as in force is hereafter referred to as "the Act").

2. I hereby assume the obligation of ensuring that due effect is given to provisions of the Act within this State so far as they are applicable therein by virtue of this Instrument of Accession.
3. I accept the matters specified in the schedule hereto as the matters with respect to which the Dominion Legislature may make law for this State.
4. I hereby declare that I accede to the Dominion of India on the assurance that if an agreement is made between the Governor General and the Ruler of this State whereby any functions in relation to the administration in this State of any law of the Dominion Legislature shall be exercised by the Ruler of the State, then any such agreement shall be construed and have effect accordingly.
5. The terms of this Instrument of Accession shall not be varied by any amendment of the Act or the Indian Independence Act, 1947, unless such amendment is accepted by me by Instrument supplementary to this Instrument.
6. Nothing in this Instrument shall empower the Dominion Legislature to make any law for this State authorizing the compulsory acquisition of land for any purpose, but I hereby undertake that should the Dominion for the purpose of a Dominion law which applies in this State deem it necessary to acquire any land, I will, at their request, acquire the land at their expense, or,

if the land belongs to me transfer it to them on such terms as may be agreed or, in default of agreement, determined by an arbitrator to be appointed by the Chief Justice of India.

7. Nothing in this Instrument shall be deemed to commit in any way acceptance of any future constitution of India or to fetter my discretion to enter into agreement with the Government of India under any such future constitution.
8. Nothing in this Instrument affects the continuance of my Sovereignty in and over this State, or, save as provided by or under this Instrument, the exercise of any powers, authority and rights now enjoyed by me as Ruler of this State or the validity of any law at present in force in this State.
9. I hereby declare that I execute this Instrument on behalf of this State and that any reference in this Instrument to me or to the Ruler of the State is to be construed as including a reference to my heirs and successors.

Given under my hand this 26th day of October, nineteen hundred and forty seven.

Hari Singh

Maharajadhiraj of

Jammu and Kashmir State

Acceptance of Accession by the Governor General of India

I do hereby accept this Instrument of Accession.

Dated this twenty seventh day of October, nineteen hundred and forty seven.

Mountbatten of Burma

Mountbatten of Burma /Governor General of India



Article 370 of the Indian Constitution

Temporary provisions with respect to the State of Jammu & Kashmir

1. Notwithstanding anything in this Constitution,

(a) the provisions of article 238 shall not apply in relation to the State of Jammu and Kashmir;

(b) the power of Parliament to make laws for the said State shall be limited to -

(i) those matters in the Union List and the Concurrent List which, in consultation with the Government of the State, are declared by the President to correspond to matters specified in the Instrument of Accession governing the accession of the State to the Dominion of India as the matters with respect to which the Dominion Legislature may make laws for that State; and

(ii) such other matters in the said Lists as, with the concurrence of the Government of the State, the President may, by order, specify.

Explanation - For the purposes of this article, the Government of the State means the person for the time being recognised by the President as the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir, acting on the advice of the Council of Ministers for the time being in office under the Maharaja's Proclamation dated the fifth day of March, 1948;

- (c) the provisions of article 1 and of this article shall apply in relation to that State;
- (d) such of the other provisions of this Constitution shall apply in relation to that State, subject to such exceptions and modifications as the President may, by order, specify :

Provided that no such order which relates to the matters specified in the Instrument of Accession of the State referred to in paragraph (i) of sub-clause (b) shall be issued except in consultation with the Government of the State :

Provided further that no such order which relates to matters other than those referred to in the last preceding proviso shall be issued except with the concurrence of that Government.

- 2. If the concurrence of the Government of the State referred to in paragraph (ii) of sub-clause (b) of clause (1) or in the second proviso to sub-clause (d) of that clause be given before the Constituent Assembly, for the purpose of framing the Constitution of the State, is convened, it shall be placed before such Assembly for such decision as it may take thereon.
- 3. Notwithstanding anything in the foregoing provisions of this article, the President may, by public notification, declare that this article shall cease to be operative or shall be operative only with such exceptions and modifications and from such date, as he may specify :

Provided that the recommendation of the Constituent Assembly of the State referred to in clause (2) shall be necessary

before the President issues such a notification.

In exercise of the powers conferred by this article, the President, on the recommendation of the Constituent Assembly of the State of Jammu and Kashmir, declared that, as from the 17th day of November, 1952, the said article 370 shall be operative with the modification that for the explanation in cl.(1) thereof the following explanation is substituted namely:

Explanation—For the purpose of this Article, the Government of the State means the person for the time being recognised by the President on the recommendation of the Legislative Assembly of the State as the *Sadar-e-Riyasat of Jammu and Kashmir, acting on the advice of Council of Ministers of the State for the time being in office.



Shimla Agreement, 1972

This agreement on bilateral relations between India and Pakistan was signed by Prime Minister of India, Smt. Indira Gandhi and President of Pakistan, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, on July 3, 1972.

The Government of India and the Government of Pakistan resolve that the two countries put an end to the conflict and confrontation that have hitherto marred their relations and work for the promotion of a friendly and harmonious relationship and the establishment of durable peace in the sub-continent, so that both countries may henceforth devote their resources and energies to the pressing task of advancing the welfare of their peoples.

In order to achieve this objective, the Government of India and the Government of Pakistan have agreed as follows :

1. That the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations shall govern the relations between the countries;
2. That the two countries resolve to settle their differences by peaceful means through bilateral negotiations or by any other peaceful means mutually agreed upon between them. Pending the final settlement of any of the problems between the two countries, neither side shall unilaterally alter the situation and

both shall prevent the organization, assistance or encouragement of any acts detrimental to the maintenance of peaceful and harmonious relations.

3. That the pre-requisite for reconciliation, good-neighbourliness and durable peace between them is a commitment by both countries to peaceful co-existence, respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty and non-interference in each other's internal affairs, on the basis of equality and mutual benefit;
4. That the basic issues and causes of conflict which have bedevilled the relations between the two countries for the last 25 years shall be resolved by peaceful means;
5. That they shall always respect each other's national unity, territorial integrity, political independence and sovereign equality;
6. That in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, they shall refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of each other;
7. Both Governments will take all the steps within their power to prevent hostile propaganda directed against each other. Both countries will encourage the dissemination of such information as would promote the development of friendly relations between them;

In order to progressively restore and normalise relations between the two countries step by step, it was agreed that -

- (i) Steps shall be taken to resume communications, postal, telegraphic, sea, land including border posts, and air links including overflights;
- (ii) Appropriate steps shall be taken to promote travel facilities for the nationals of the other country;

- (iii) Trade and co-operation in economic and other agreed fields will be resumed as far as possible;
- (iv) Exchange in the fields of science and culture will be promoted.

In this connection, delegations from the two countries will meet from time to time to work out the necessary details.

In order to initiate the process of the establishment of durable peace, both Governments agreed on three points as follows-

- (i) Indian and Pakistani forces shall be withdrawn to their side of the international border;
- (ii) In Jammu and Kashmir, the line of control resulting from the cease-fire of December 17, 1971 shall be respected by both sides without prejudice to the recognized position of either side. Neither side shall seek to alter it unilaterally, irrespective of mutual differences and legal interpretations. Both sides further undertake to refrain from the threat of the use of force in violation of this line;
- (iii) The withdrawal of forces and exchange of the prisoners of war (POWs) shall commence upon enforcement of this Agreement and shall be completed within a period of thirty days thereof.

This Agreement will be subject to ratification by both countries in accordance with their respective constitutional procedures, and will come into force with effect from the date on which the Instruments of Ratification are exchanged.

Both Governments agree that their respective Heads will meet again at a mutually convenient time in the future and that, in the meanwhile, the representatives of the two sides will meet to discuss further the modalities and arrangements for the establishment of durable peace and normalization of relations, including the questions

of repatriation of prisoners of war and civilian internees, a final settlement of Jammu and Kashmir and the resumption of diplomatic relations.

Sd/-

Indira Gandhi

Prime Minister

Republic of India

Sd/-

Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto

President

Islamic Republic of Pakistan



Kashmir Accord, 1975

Agreed conclusions which led to Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah's accord with Smt. Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister and his subsequent assumption of office as Chief Minister in February, 1975 :-

1. The State of Jammu and Kashmir which is a constituent unit of the Union of India, shall, in its relation with the Union, continue to be governed by Article 370 of the Constitution of India.
2. The residuary powers of legislation shall remain with the State; however, Parliament will continue to have power to make laws relating to the prevention of activities directed towards disclaiming, questioning or disrupting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of India or bringing about cession of a part of the territory of India or secession of a part of the territory of India from the Union or causing insult to the Indian National Flag, the Indian National Anthem and the Constitution.
3. Where any provision of the Constitution of India had been applied to the State of Jammu and Kashmir with adaptation and modification, such adaptations and modifications can be altered or repealed by an order of the President under Article 370, each individual proposal in this behalf being considered on its merits; but provisions of the Constitution of India already applied to the State of Jammu and Kashmir without adaptation

or modification are unalterable.

4. With a view to assuring freedom to the State of Jammu and Kashmir to have its own legislation on matters like welfare measures, cultural matters, social security, personal law and procedural laws, in a manner suited to the special conditions in the State, it is agreed that the State Government can review the laws made by Parliament or extended to the State after 1953 on any matter relatable to the Concurrent List and may decide which of them, in its opinion, needs amendment or repeal. Thereafter, appropriate steps may be taken under Article 254 of the Constitution of India. The grant of President's assent to such legislation would be sympathetically considered. The same approach would be adopted in regard to laws to be made by Parliament in future under the Proviso to clause 2 of the Article. The State Government shall be consulted regarding the application of any such law to the State and the views of the State Government shall receive the fullest consideration.

5. As an arrangement reciprocal to what has been provided under Article 368, a suitable modification of that Article as applied to State should be made by Presidential order to the effect that no law made by the Legislature of the State of Jammu and Kashmir, seeking to make any change in or in the effect of any provision of Constitution of the State of Jammu and Kashmir relating to any of the under mentioned matters, shall take effect unless the Bill, having been reserved for the consideration of the President, receives his assent ; the matters are: -

- (a) the appointment, powers, functions, duties, privileges and immunities of the Governor, and
- (b) the following matters relating to Elections, namely, the superintendence, direction and control of Elections by the

Election Commission of India, eligibility for inclusion in the electoral rolls without discrimination, adult suffrage and composition of the Legislative Council, being matters specified in sections 138, 139, 140 and 150 of the Constitution of the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

6. No agreement was possible on the question of nomenclature of the Governor and the Chief Minister and the matter is therefore remitted to the Principals.

Mirza Mohammad Afzal Beg
New Delhi,
November 13, 1974.

G Parthasarthi



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